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CHAPTER III

THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

"England that lives in the north of Europe and Spain that dwells in the south" wrote Walpole to Horace Mann in October, 1770, "are vehemently angry with one another about a morsel of rock that lies somewhere at the very bottom of America, for modern nations are too neighborly to quarrel about anything that lies so near them as in the same quarter of the globe. Pray, mind; we dethrone nabobs in the most northeast corner of the Indies; the Czarina sends a fleet from the Pole to besiege Constantinople; and Spain huffs and we arm, for one of the extremities of the southern hemisphere. It takes a twelvemonth for any one of us to arrive at our object, and almost another twelvemonth before we can learn what we have been about. Your patriarchs, who lived eight or nine hundred years, could afford to wait eighteen or twenty months for the post coming in, but it is too ridiculous in our post-diluvian circumstances. By next century, I suppose, we shall fight for the Dog Star and the Great Bear."¹²⁹ The subject of these reflections, the Falkland Islands, whose disputed sovereignty had brought the two greatest colonial powers of the world to the very brink of war, had been among the minor discoveries of the sixteenth century. They had first been sighted by the English navigator, Captain John Davis, in 1592, and had been seen for a second time two years later, again by an English sailor, when Richard Hawkins sailed along their northern shores and in honor of his sovereign bestowed upon them the name of Hawkins' Maiden Land.¹³⁰ In "the spacious days" of the Great

¹²⁹ *Letters of Sir Horace Walpole*, 4th Earl of Oxford. Ed., Peter Cunningham. Vol. V, p. 259, London, 1891.

¹³⁰ S. P. Spain, supplementary, 253. Egmont (John Perceval, 2nd Earl of Egmont, 1st lord of the admiralty, 10 Sept., 1763-Aug. 1766) to Grafton (secretary of state for the Northern Department), 20 July, 1765. "The first and second discoveries of this Island [Falkland's] were both made, by the subjects and under

Queen, when no year passed without adding richly to man's geographical knowledge, the finding of a group of islands covering some five thousand square miles at the southern end of the New World naturally aroused very little interest. For a century and a half after their discovery, though seen and visited by many of the seamen whose calling took them into the south Atlantic, the Falkland Islands continued for the most part the same obscure

the authority of the crown of Great Britain in the reign of Queen Elizabeth and Charles II, and the French never saw them till in the reign of Queen Anne. Their present projector Frezier owns that they were first discovered by the English." In this letter Egmont enclosed a number of extracts from journals of voyages of discoveries. The following are drawn from the accounts of their experiences by Davis and Hawkins:

"Captain Davis of the *Desire*, one of the ships that sailed with Mr. Cavendish on his last voyage to the South Sea." Hakluyt, vol. 3, p. 846, printed in the year 1600. (Enclosed by Egmont to Grafton, 20 July, 1765).

"The seventh of August, 1592, towards night we departed from Penguin Isle [near Port Desire on the coast of Patagonia] shaping our course for the straights, where we had full confidence to meet our general. The ninth we had a sore storm, so that we were constrained to hull, for our sails were not to endure any force. The fourteenth we were driven in among certain Isles never before discovered by any known relation, lying 50 leagues or better from the shore east and northerly from the straights. In which place unless it had pleased God of his wonderful mercy to have ceased the wind we must of necessity have perished."

Sir Richard Hawkins, *Voyage to the South Seas*, pp. 69-70. Printed in the year 1622. "The second of February, 1593/4 about nine of the clock in the morning we discerned land which bore S. W. of us, which we looked not for so timely and coming nearer and nearer unto it, by the lying we could not conjecture what land it should be, for we were not next of anything in 48 degrees, and no platt or sea chart which we had made mention of any land which lay in that manner near about that height. In fine we brought our larboard tack on board and stood to the northeastward all the day and night, and the wind continuing westerly and a fair gale we continued our course along the coast the day and night following, in which time we made account we discovered land well near threescore leagues off the coast. It is bold and made small shew of dangers. The land is goodly champain country and peopled. We saw many fires, but could not come to speak with the people for the time of the year was far spent, to shoot the straights and the want of our pinnace disabled us for finding a port or road, not being discretion with a ship of charge, and in an unknown coast to come nearer the shore before it was sounded which were causes . . . that hindered the further discovery of this land with its secrets." [Here follows a detailed description of natural features which he saw, or thought he saw, from his ship.] He continues: "The land for that it was discovered in the reign of Queen Elizabeth my sovereign lady and mistress and a maiden queen, and at my cost and adventure, in a perpetual memory of her chastity and remembrance of my endeavours, I gave it the name of Hawkins' Maiden Land."

and deserted existence among the ocean mists which had been theirs since the beginning of time. On the maps of the world the new archipelago appeared under various names differing with the nationality of the mapmaker. The English called the group "Falkland Islands" from the name bestowed on the sound between the two main islands by John Strong in 1690.¹³¹ The

¹³¹ James Burney, *Chronological History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea or the Pacific Ocean*. Vol. IV, Part II, p. 329, London, 1816. Burney writes of Strong's expedition: "In the war between Great Britain and France, which ensued on the accession of William III and Mary to the British throne. Spain being at the same time at war with France. some merchants in England joined in the equipment of a ship for the purpose of trading with the Spanish settlements in the South Sea. They obtained a commission from the Admiralty for their ship to cruise upon the French, which was granted with a proviso that the commander should keep an exact journal of his proceedings and transmit a copy of it to the commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of England. Another object was to search after a 'rich wreck or two at or near the Point of Santa Elena not far from the Bay of Puna and to endeavour to fish up some of the lost treasure.' "

"The *Welfare*, a ship of 270 tons" under the command of John Strong and with a crew of 90 men sailed from England, 1 Nov., 1689, and on January 27, 1690, came in sight of "Davis' Southern Islands". Strong describes his discovery of the sound between the two main islands. (Burney, *idem*, pp. 330, 331.) "On Latitude 51°3' S, Tuesday the 28th. This morning at four o'clock we saw a rock that lyeth from the main Island four or five leagues. It makes like a sail. At six we stood into a sound that lies about 20 leagues from the westernmost land we had seen. The sound lyeth south and north. There is 24 fathoms depth at the entrance which is 4 leagues wide. We came to an anchor six or seven leagues within, in 14 fathoms water. Here are many good harbors. We found fresh water in plenty, and killed abundance of geese and ducks. As for wood there is none." They remained in a harbor on the western side of the sound till the 31st, when they sailed on southward and found a clear passage to the open sea in that direction. "On the 31st in the morning we weighed from this harbor with the wind S.W.S. We sent our longboat ahead of the ship to sound before us. At eight o'clock in the evening we anchored in 9 fathoms. The next morning we weighed and sent our boat before us. At ten we were clear out of the sound. At twelve we set the West Cape bearing for N.E. which we named Cape Farewell. This Sound, Falkland Sound as I named it, is about 17 leagues long. The first entrance lies S. to E. and afterwards S. to W." Note by Burney, *idem*, IV., part II, p. 331. "It appears that the name of Falkland was given by Captain Strong to the Sound or Passage through which he sailed . . . and that he did not intend to disturb any name before given to the lands, which he calls in his journal Hawkins' Land. By some accident or misapprehension, however, the name Falkland has been adopted by the English for the general name of all these Islands." Strong's MS. "Journal" and Richard Simson's account of the voyage entitled "Observations made during a South Sea Voyage" are in the British Museum.

Dutch knew them as the Sebaldine Islands from the name of their first Dutch discoverer.¹³² The French called them Les Malouines, following the French explorers of the early eighteenth century who had wished to honor the enterprising port of St. Malo from which they had set sail. The Spaniards, nationalizing the French name, knew them as the Malvinas. But, while European recognition was in this way accorded the existence of the new islands, knowledge of natural conditions prevailing on them was almost wholly lacking. Explorers who mentioned them in the narratives of their adventures referred to their natural features vaguely or inaccurately, describing what they had seen during the short time their vessels had taken to replenish water supplies, or giving an account merely of what they had observed, as their ships plied along the shores on their way to the Horn.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century there appears to have been no project formed for establishing a settlement upon the Falkland Islands. Then in the year 1748, Lord Anson,¹³³ in his *Voyage Round the World in the Years 1740-1744*, set forth at some length the advantages which his experience suggested would flow from a British settlement upon islands so conveniently

¹³² Sebald de Wert, a Dutch navigator, visited the Falklands in 1598, being apparently the third European sailor to locate the group.

¹³³ George, Lord Anson (1697-1762). At the close of the year 1739, Anson (then captain) assumed command of a British squadron destined for the Pacific. His instructions were "to use your best endeavors to annoy and distress the Spaniards (against whom war had been declared on 19 Oct., 1739) either on sea or land to the utmost of your power, by taking, sinking, burning, or otherwise destroying all their ships and vessels that you shall meet with". He sailed with his six vessels on September 18, 1740. At the Horn he encountered heavy gales which cost him two of his vessels. On the Pacific he sacked the Spanish town of Païta and had the good fortune to succeed in capturing the annual Spanish galleon on its way from Acapulco to Manila with her treasure of a million and half dollars. After this exploit Anson circumnavigated the globe and returned to England in 1744, where he was shortly promoted to the rank of rear admiral and became one of the commissioners of the admiralty. During the Duke of Bedford's tenor of office as first lord of the admiralty (1744-1748) and later while the Earl of Sandwich held the same post (1748-1751) Anson acted as the real executive chief of this department of state. On the retirement of Sandwich from the office in 1751, Anson received the official appointment as first lord of the admiralty and continued to hold the office with the exception of an interval of a few months (Oct., 1756-July, 1757) until his death on June 6, 1762, being thus the head of the naval service through the greater part of the Seven Years' War.

situated in the very pathway which led to the "South Seas"—that happy hunting ground of eighteenth century adventurers. Like other English navigators before him Anson had experienced great inconvenience from having a full description of his expedition furnished by the Portuguese of St. Catherine's Island on the Brazilian coast, where he had been forced to stop for water, to the Spaniards of the Río de la Plata.¹³⁴ Considering the enormous contraband trade constantly carried on by the Portuguese with the Spaniards, Anson believed that any anchorage on the Brazilian coast would possess similar disadvantages involving an end to all hopes of capturing Spanish trading ships, as on the news of the presence of an enemy ship, Spanish navigation along the coast instantly stopped.¹³⁵ He therefore suggested that the Falklands and Pepys Island¹³⁶ should be surveyed by a ship especially fitted

¹³⁴ Anson, George. *A Voyage round the world in the year MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV*, Dublin, 1748, p. 47. " . . . we afterwards found by letters, which fell into our hands in the South Seas, that he (the Spanish governor of St. Catherine's) had dispatched an express to Buenos Ayres, where Pizarro (the Spanish Comodoro who had been sent out from Spain with six vessels, five of them of the line, to intercept Anson on his way to the Horn) then lay, with an account of our squadron's arrival at St. Catherine's, together with the most ample and circumstantial intelligence of our force and condition. . . . "

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73. " . . . The treatment we met with, and the small store of refreshments we could procure there (St. Catherine's) are sufficient reasons to render all ships for the future cautious, how they trust themselves in the government of Don Jose Silva de Paz; for they may certainly depend on having their strength, condition, and designs betrayed to the Spaniards, as far as the knowledge the Governor can procure of these particulars will give leave. And as this treacherous conduct is inspired by the views of private gain, in the illicit commerce carried on to the river Plate, rather than by any national affection which the Portuguese bear the Spaniards, the same perfidy may perhaps be expected from most of the governors of the Brazil coast, since these smuggling engagements are doubtless very extensive and general. . . . The Spanish trade in the South Seas running all in one track from north to south, with very little deviation to the eastward or westward, it is in the power of two or three cruisers properly stationed in different parts of this track, to possess themselves of every ship that puts to sea; but this is only so long as they can continue concealed from the neighbouring coast; for the instant an enemy is known to be in those seas, all navigation is stopped, and consequently all captures are at an end; since the Spaniards, . . . send expresses along the coast, and lay a general embargo on all their trade."

¹³⁶ Since Cowley's voyage of discovery in the South Atlantic in 1683 it had been believe that there existed in latitude 47°40' an island well furnished with the

out by the government for that purpose and the fact ascertained whether they were suitable for the establishment of a naval station at which ships bound for the South Seas could refresh themselves without their presence in the south Atlantic becoming known to the Spaniards. An anchorage so conveniently situated at a considerable distance from the continent and yet near the Horn would be, he thought, of "prodigious import". From it the Spanish trade along the South American coast could be easily preyed upon and Spain in time of war otherwise infinitely distressed.¹³⁷ To further the same patriotic purpose and to make still easier the path of British ships to the Pacific, Anson also urged that the whole coast of Patagonia especially on its western side, together with the shores of Tierra del Fuego and Staten Land, should be carefully surveyed with a view to discovering a convenient port for refreshment in the Pacific, nearer to the Falkland Islands than Juan Fernández,¹³⁸ the one then in use.

two great requisites of wood and water and admirably located as a place of refuge and refreshment for British vessels on the long and dangerous voyage to the Pacific. The finding of this island formed one of the objects of practically every English navigator for a hundred years after Cowley's "Journal" had described it in glowing terms to the world. It was not until repeated visits to the spot had failed to reveal the presence of an island that Pepys' Island ceased to figure on maps of the South Atlantic. The following passage from Byron's *Voyage round the World in H. M. ship Dolphin* (1767, pp. 77, 78) offers an explanation of the origin of the story. "It will not be improper here to take notice that as in most of the charts of Patagonia, an island is described by the name of Pepys Island, where travellers have asserted that they have seen trees in abundance and many rills of water, but that after several attempts in the latitude where it was said to be discovered no island nor any soundings could be found; in justice to the pretended discoverers of that and other imaginary islands, we ought to observe, that they had probably no intention to deceive; for on this coast where you meet with frequent gales of wind, and thick foggy weather, we found the banks of fog were apt to deceive even an accurate observer and make him mistake them for land. Thus we ourselves have frequently imagined that we saw land very near; but suddenly a breeze of wind springing up, our supposed land disappeared, though we did not think ourselves above a league and a half from it, and convinced us of our great mistake by opening to our view an unbounded prospect."

¹³⁷ Anson, George, *A Voyage round the World*, p. 78.

¹³⁸ Letter from Anti Oberus to Mr. Urban, *Gentleman's Magazine*, Dec., 1770. "At a proper season, which is December and January, it is little more than a month's sail from Falkland's Islands to the island of Juan Fernández in the south seas."

He recalled to the minds of his contemporaries that Charles II. had despatched Sir John Narborough to survey the Straits of Magellan and the neighboring coasts of Patagonia for the purpose of opening up friendly relations with the Chilean Indians "who were generally at war or at least on ill terms with their Spanish neighbors". This excellent project of the Stuart king, Lord Anson pointed out, had been unsuccessful from purely accidental causes and deserved to be renewed with all vigor.¹³⁹ With two such aids to navigation as these stepping-stones would provide, England, Lord Anson thought, could face with equanimity European competition in the Pacific.

In 1750, shortly after the return of peace between England and Spain as the result of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Anson, equipped with paramount influence at the admiralty office, set about clothing the theories advanced in his book in practical form. Preparations were taken in hand to despatch some frigates to examine the Falkland Islands, and make discoveries in the South Seas. These activities were brought to a halt by remonstrances from the Spanish ambassador who made such strong representations against the project that for the sake of peace the government decided to put the matter to one side for the moment,¹⁴⁰ without acquiescing, however, in Spain's pretensions that the islands in question were merely an appanage of Patagonia, or that the Papal Bull of 1493 had conferred on her the right to

¹³⁹ Anson, George, *Voyage round the world*, pp. 78, 79, 80. "His [Narborough's] disappointment was merely accidental and his transactions on the coast . . . are rather an encouragement for future trials of this kind than an objection against them."

¹⁴⁰ S. P. France 271. Lord George Lennox to Shelburne, 17 Sept., 1766. "In a conversation I had last Sunday with the Duc de Choiseul he told me there were two subjects he wished to speak to me about. . . . The first, he said, related to Les Isles Malouines which Spain has claimed and obtained from France, in consequence of the Treaty of Utrecht as by it all but Spaniards are excluded from sailing in that part of the World, and England's having already observed the article of the treaty in laying aside, (as it is alleged) a project of Lord Anson's in the year 1751 for those seas on the representation of Mr. Wall, then minister from Spain in England, was given as a proof of the propriety of their demand"

all discoveries in the region.¹⁴¹ Here the matter stood until the close of the Seven Years' War.

With the Peace of Paris came a renewal of exploring activities in which the Falkland Islands became the object of two separate expeditions, both directly inspired by Anson's work. From England, the Earl of Egmont, Anson's successor as first lord of the admiralty, took up his predecessor's scheme and despatched Commodore Byron to the south Atlantic with orders "to proceed to His Majesty's Islands called Falklands' and Pepys's Islands, situate in the Atlantic Ocean near the Straits of Magellan, in order to make better surveys than had yet been made and to determine a place or places most proper for a new settlement or settlements thereon".¹⁴² After searching in vain for the mythical

¹⁴¹ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Egmont to Grafton, 20 July, 1765. "Your Grace and the rest of the King's servants will no doubt particularly consider how far and in what manner this project [that of establishing an English settlement on the Falklands] may commit Great Britain with the Spaniards or the French. First as to Spain, it is impossible that their pretended title from the Pope's Grant or any treaty (so far as I can recollect) can give them the least claim to an Island lying 80 or 100 leagues in the Atlantic ocean eastward of the continent of South America to which it cannot be deemed appurtenant . . . and the attempt of France to settle there seems to confirm this argument against all that can be urged by either of those powers to that effect. With respect to France the first and second discoveries of this Island were both made by the subjects and under the authority of the crown of Great Britain. . . . " Cf. note 130.

¹⁴² S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Conway to the lords of the admiralty, 20 July, 1765. The importance which Egmont attached to a settlement on the Falklands is clear from his letter to the Duke of Grafton, 20 July, 1765 (*idem*). "This station . . . is undoubtedly the key to the whole Pacific ocean. . . . This island must command the Ports of trade of Chile, Peru, Panama, Acapulco, and in one word all the Spanish territory in that sea. It will render all our expeditions to those parts most lucrative to ourselves, most fatal to Spain and no longer formidable, tedious, or uncertain in a future war, and the coast of Chile from the Straits of Magellan to the Isle of Chiloe is wholly savage and uninhabited by the Spaniards, and possessed by the most warlike of all the native Indians in perpetual hostility with Spain. This country abounding above all the rest in mines of gold and silver and the navigation through those Straits to Chiloe being now well known and such as seldom exceed a month Your Grace will presently perceive the prodigious use hereafter to be made of an establishment in this place by the nation who shall first fix a footing there. . . . "

Pepys' Island,¹⁴³ Byron in January, 1765,¹⁴⁴ reached an excellent anchorage in one of the smaller islands of the Falkland group, which he described as "one of the finest harbours in the world" and to which he gave the name of Port Egmont.¹⁴⁵ On the twenty-third of the same month after coasting the island above seventy leagues, he unfurled a union jack on one of the two main islands and "took possession of this country in form for His Majesty and his Heirs".¹⁴⁶ Although from the Falklands Byron continued his journey around the world, not returning to England until 1766, his work in the south Atlantic was at once followed up.

¹⁴³ Byron, *A Voyage round the World in the ship, The Dolphin*, London, 1767, p. 41. The island is spoken of as "laid down in our charts in the latitude of 48 degrees south, and in the longitude of 64 degrees from the meridian of London bearing east by south of Cape Blanco". Cowley named it in honor of Samuel Pepys, secretary to James, Duke of York, then lord high admiral of England. "All our endeavours were ineffectual and we were firmly persuaded of the impracticability of finding any such place".

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 69. Byron sighted the islands on January 13, and landed January 15.

¹⁴⁵ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Byron to Egmont, 24 Feb., 1765.

In Byron's account of his voyage, (*Voyage Round the World in H. M. ship, The Dolphin*, pp. 70, 71), he writes: "Port Egmont is surrounded by a range of islands perfectly disjoined, and each placed in a convenient and agreeable situation. There are three different passages into this port, one from the south-west, another from the north-east, and the third from the south-east, and this last we found capable of receiving a ship of the greatest burthen. This harbor is of such extent as to be able to receive the whole royal navy of England, which might lie in the greatest security."

The later settlement called Port Egmont is described as "situated on the south side of an island, named Saunders, from whence there was a view of the whole harbor called Port Egmont". Bernard Penrose, *An Account of the Last Expedition to Port Egmont, in Falkland's Islands in the year 1772*, London, 1775, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ Byron, *A Voyage round the World in H. M. ship, The Dolphin*, p. 76. "On the 23rd January the commodore with the captains of the Dolphin and Tamer and the principal officers, went on shore to the above island, where the Union Jack was erected on a high staff, and being spread, the Commodore named the whole His Majesty's isles, which he claimed for the crown of Great Britain, his heirs and successors. The colors were no sooner spread than a salute was fired from the ship. They were very merry on the occasion, a large bowl of arrack punch being carried on shore, out of which they drank, among several loyal toasts, success to the discovery of so fine a harbor."

The storeship which the explorer had sent home from Port Famine with an account of his work at the Falklands reached England on June the twenty-first. Within a month the admiralty had received instructions that another "embarcation" was to be made "in order to carry into further execution the said settlement at Port Egmont upon the Falkland Islands". The new expedition, like the first, was to consist of three vessels, a frigate of thirty-two guns, a sloop, and a storeship. These were to be furnished with all the provisions and necessaries, especially a "wooden blockhouse ready framed" for the erection of a permanent settlement on the shores of Port Egmont. Twenty-five marines, including officers, were to constitute the defense force and were promised relief within the ensuing year. The commanding officer whose first duty was to complete the settlement "at all events" bore instructions how to proceed should he find any occupants on the islands. If the intruders were savages, they were to be treated kindly and won by gentle methods; if, on the other hand, "any lawless persons should happen to be found seated on any part of the said Islands" they were to be compelled either "to quit the said Island or to take the oath and acknowledge and submit themselves to His Majesty's Government as subjects of the Crown of Great Britain" and finally, "if, contrary to expectation, the subjects of any Foreign Power in amity with Great Britian should under any real or pretended authority have taken upon them to make any settlement of any kind or nature whatsoever upon any part or parts either of the said Falklands or Pepys Islands" the commander was to "visit such settlement and remonstrate against their proceedings acquainting them that the said Islands had been first discovered by the subjects of the Crown of England sent out by the Government thereof for that purpose and of right belong to His Majesty, and His Majesty having given orders for the settlement thereof the subjects of no other power can have any title to establish themselves without the King's permission". If they refused to depart within a limited time the English officer was "to avoid proceeding to measures of hostility" but to despatch a ship with

full information to England for assistance.¹⁴⁷ Captain John McBride, of H. M. Ship *Jason*, was appointed to command the expedition. Accompanied by the *Carcass* sloop and a storeship, *Experiment*, he left England in September, 1765, and sailing by way of the Madeira and Cape Verde Islands reached Port Egmont in the following January.¹⁴⁸

Before the southern winter closed in, Captain McBride sent home an account of his first three months on the Falklands.¹⁴⁹ This was far less favorable to the new settlement than Byron's report had been. Instead of expatiating on the advantages of "the finest harbour in the world", the beauties of a land "wanting nothing but wood", and the possibilities of mineral wealth, the man who had spent three months there dwelt on "the dreary prospect of a range of craggy barren mountains heightened by almost constant gales of wind" and emphasized the inconvenience of a total lack of wood, the scarcity of fuel and the presence of "an incredible number of sea lyons, penguins, and other vermin". The section of the letter, however, which aroused the greatest interest in government circles was undoubtedly the statement "we have seen no appearance of any settlement or where any had ever been attempted".

The British ministry, by the summer of 1766, had very good reason to fear that it had been anticipated in its enterprise in the Falklands. Only six or seven weeks after Bryon had sailed a disturbing notice had appeared in the foreign gazettes that some French frigates had recently returned to St. Malo from visiting and exploring the Malouines and the South Atlantic coasts.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Conway to the Lords of the Admiralty, 20 July, 1765. *Ibid.* Secret Instructions to Captain John McBride, 26 Sept., 1765.

¹⁴⁸ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. McBride to Egmont, 6 April, 1766.

¹⁴⁹ This letter went by the store-ship *Experiment* which sailed from Port Egmont, 6 April, 1766. It was in the hands of the Admiralty on 19 June, following.

¹⁵⁰ S. P. Spain, supplementary, 253. Egmont to Grafton, 20 July, 1765. "It was many months after Captain Byron's expedition was planned and six or seven weeks after he had sailed that the first suspicion was entertained in England of any design on the part of France to attempt this island. In Sept. 1764 a paragraph in the foreign gazettes first mentioned that some frigates were returned to St. Maloes from visiting and exploring the coast there."

The news had been despatched at once by a storeship to Byron, in a letter which had reached him on his return to Port Desire after his exploration of the islands¹⁵¹ and had received careful consideration in his return despatch to the admiralty of February 24, 1765.¹⁵² After pointing out that a reference to Frezier's voyage would prove that "the French themselves acknowledge our countryman, Sir Richard Hawkins, to have been the first discoverer of the Falkland Islands" he had written that incoasting the island "as far as any ship would dare to venture" he had seen "no smoke or signs of anybody being there", and that as for Port Egmont he was "almost certain we are the first ships that have ever been there since the creation". He reported the suspicious circumstance, however, that in sailing from Port Desire to Port Famine he had been followed by "a strange ship"

¹⁵¹ Byron, *A Voyage round the World in H. M. ship, The Dolphin*, p. 80. Byron reached Port Desire on February the fifth and there, to his great satisfaction, found the 'Florida' store-ship which had been "despatched by the Lord of the Admiralty with as much secrecy as the 'Dolphin' ". At four in the afternoon the master of the storeship came on board, bringing a packet from the Lords of the Admiralty to the commodore.

¹⁵² S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Copy of a letter from Commodore Byron to Lord Egmont, dated Port Famine, 24 Feb., 1765. "Mr. Stephens informs me the French have been lately at the Isles Malouines as Falkland Islands are called in some charts. . . ."

The French in later years claimed that the immediate reason for Byron's expedition had been a report of the establishment of a French settlement in the Falklands. "The History of a Voyage to the Malouine or (Falklands) Islands made in 1763 and 1764 under the command of M. de Bougainville in order to form a settlement there", translated from Dom Pernetys' *Historical Journal*, written in French. London, 1771. Preface. ". . . The English, having been informed of the expedition we made there in 1764, thought it necessary to establish themselves in those islands, notwithstanding that we had already taken possession of them in the name of the crown of France. In preparing for this voyage, which excited the attention of all Europe, they took extraordinary precautions. . . . We had taken possession of these islands in the beginning of April, before the 'Dolphin' was off the stocks, and we quitted them the eighth of the same month on our return to France, where we landed the twenty-sixth of June. The English did not sail till some days after."

The exact date of sailing from England is not mentioned in *A Voyage round the World in H. M. ship The Dolphin*, but it is stated (pp. 4, 5) that on 28 June the vessel was still at Plymouth. Madeira was reached 14 July. Egmont's letter to Grafton, 20 July, 1765 (cf. note 22), and Byron's letter to Egmont, 24 Feb., 1766, do not substantiate the French accusation.

which "kept at a good distance from us but always shaped the same course", and while in the Straits hoisted the French colors and appeared "full of men and seemed to have a great many officers". He "imagined . . . that this French vessel was either from the Islands to get wood here or was upon the survey of the Straits". Before the storeship bearing Byron's letter had reached England, British suspicions of a "design on the part of the French to attempt this Island" had been further strengthened by the information that the famous French voyager, Frezier himself, had in March told "a person employed to view the ports of France" that he had been consulted by the French ministers upon this undertaking and that three or four French frigates were to be employed in the approaching summer to make the settlement.¹⁵³

This unofficial intelligence, which, as Egmont pointed out to the Duke of Grafton, might, thereafter, be supposed, "meant to have been such as deserved our notice" or of a character of which "total ignorance" could be pretended, "as it shall best suit the conduct which His Majesty may think proper to hold upon this delicate affair", hastened the secret preparations for the despatch of the expedition under McBride in the hope that the English settlement might be established at least as early as the French. By the spring of the following year, however, the admiralty was in possession of the information that a French settlement had been made, or attempted, on the east end of the Falkland Islands, in 1764, under the conduct of a M. de Bougainville, and was in a position to send out to McBride a copy of a

¹⁵³ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Egmont to Grafton, 20 July, 1765. ". . . Have only to add that as things now stand, the King's minister should immediately take this matter under consideration and come to a very speedy resolution upon it . . . that the Admiralty may receive H. M.'s orders, if anything is to be done without delay." [By next season] "the French will have certainly fixed a colony which will have taken root full twelve months before any that in that case (allowing this season to pass) can be made by us and may be then probably out of our power to expell, at least without direct and avowed hostilities which may bring on avowed hostilities with both France and Spain."

plan of the Bay of Acaron on which the rival establishment was reported to be located.¹⁵⁴

On arrival at Port Egmont in January, 1766, McBride had lost no time in following his instructions to complete as rapidly as possible the inspection of the islands which Byron had begun. Within a month of his arrival he had sailed round the group and had then commenced a minute and systematic survey of the land. As he began on the west side and as the interruption of the long southern winter hindered the work it was not until the very close of the year that any trace of French occupation was discovered. On November the twenty-fifth, 1766, a survey party discovered on the highest mountain in the West Island¹⁵⁵ a bottle containing a paper bearing evidence of the French in that part of the island in the early part of 1765. The storeship with the admiralty map of the Bay of Acaron had already arrived when this party returned to Port Egmont, and with its assistance an expedition to the east revealed the French settlement on December the third.

In accordance with his instructions McBride sent an officer with a letter demanding an explanation from the French commanding officer of the presence of the French settlement on the island, and shortly followed this up by a statement that he meant to land and inspect the settlement. Although at first the French manned their guns and seemed disposed to use force to prevent the intrusion of the English, in the end they yielded and the visit was made. McBride found that Bougainville de Nerville's commission as "commandant des Isles Malouines" was dated August 1, 1764, and that the French establishment consisted of 17 houses, 130 inhabitants, and 3 schooners. Leaving

¹⁵⁴ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Stephens to McBride, 17 March, 1766. "My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received a copy of the plan of the Bay of Acaron situated at the East end of the Malouine Islands (supposed to be Falklands' Isles) where M. de Bougainville made a settlement in the year 1764. . . . I send herewith a copy for your information and use."

¹⁵⁵ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. McBride to Stephens. "On the 25th November, the boats, having finished the survey of the west side, returned through Carlisle Sound and having landed on the east side of it, upon Mount B., the highest in the island, officers found a bottle containing enclosed papers which had been left by some French officers and others who had been on that part of the island in the beginning of 1765."

behind a solemn warning for the French to depart from his Britannic majesty's possession, McBride returned to Port Egmont, and shortly afterwards, on the arrival of Captain Raynor in the *Swift* sloop to relieve him, left for England where he arrived on the twentieth of March, 1767.¹⁵⁶

The French colony, which it was now discovered had actually been in existence on the east side of East Falkland at the time Byron carried out his flag-raising ceremony on the north shore of West Falkland,¹⁵⁷ owed its existence to a French army officer

¹⁵⁶ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. McBride to Stephens, 21 March, 1767. "I anchored in Pembroke Sound the 2nd December, in the evening. The next morning I sent an officer upon the top of a mountain that overlooked Berkeley's Sound; who returned at noon, with an account that he had discovered the French settlement. I sailed in the evening from Pembroke Sound and next day anchored in Berkeley's Sound 4 miles short of the French settlement. . . . I sent an officer ashore with a letter to the commanding officer demanding by what authority he had erected a settlement there, who, not understanding English, sent an officer on board with a letter to me, desiring to be informed of my intentions which when I had told him he said they would not permit me to enter the port or suffer any person to come on shore. I replied that I was determined to enter the port." While the "French were busy mounting guns on a point at the entrance to the Basin", McBride worked his way further up the sound and again anchored. From this point he sent a second letter to the commander telling him of his resolution to land if officers were not allowed to examine the settlement. The boat bearing this letter was met by "a launch with soldiers in it with bayonets fixed". After waiting an hour in vain for a reply, McBride ordered his boats to be manned and armed and brought abreast of the battery, whereupon the French retired from their guns and after some further altercation "gave up the point" and McBride went on shore. After inspecting the settlement he gave the French "warning to remove from the islands", an order to which the French commander replied that they would not obey unless forced.

The first letter from McBride to the commanding officer was in the following terms: "*Jason* Berkeley Sound, 4 December, 1766". "As the Falkland Islands were discovered by subjects of the crown of England sent out by the Government for the purpose and of right belongs to His Majesty, and His Majesty having given orders for the settlement thereof, the subjects of no other Power have any title to establish themselves therein without the King's permission. I desire to be informed by what authority you have erected a settlement upon the said Islands." McBride's second letter to the commanding officer of the French settlement is dated 6 Dec., 1766. Bougainville de Nerville's letter to McBride is dated 4 Dec., 1766. McBride returned to Port Egmont, 9 Dec., and Raynor arrived, January the fourth, 1767.

¹⁵⁷ Pernetty, *The History of a Voyage to the Malouine or Falkland Islands made in 1763 and 1764*, London, 1771. Preface, p. IV. "At the time even when these

Louis Antoine de Bougainville, who had made a name for himself during the Seven Years' War as aide-de-camp to Montcalm in Canada, and later in distinguished service on the Rhine. After the Peace of Paris, believing that the military profession would offer no attractions in a period of international calm, he had determined to embark on a career as an explorer. A perusal of Anson's account of his *Voyage round the World* had suggested the idea that France might find indemnification in the southern ocean for her losses in North America, and had determined him as a first step to realize Anson's plan of a station in the Falkland Islands.¹⁵⁸ Whatever the future, such a settlement seemed to promise financial rewards from a contraband trade to the neighboring Spanish and Portuguese colonies and from the development of whale and seal fisheries. A communication of this project to the French ministry met with encouragement, although the condition of the treasury made it necessary that Bougainville should find the required funds from other than government sources. With his father's assistance a frigate and a sloop were fitted out at St. Malo and prospective settlers, among whom were some Acadian families, taken on board. The destination was reached in February, 1764, and the new settlement which received the name of Port Louis began its history.

A contemporary Spanish writer,¹⁵⁹ who refused to credit Bougainville with any motives higher than a desire to attract the favorable notice of his government, thought it impossible that the French officer could have genuinely expected that either

two vessels [Byron's *Dolphin* and *The Tamer*] arrived there, M. de Bougainville was then returned; and having seen them from the port, where he lay at anchor, set sail for the Straights of Magellan where he met with them."

¹⁵⁸ Pernetty, *The History of a Voyage to the Malouine or Falkland Islands made in 1763 and 1764*, London, 1771. Introduction. "After the peace was concluded by a cession of all Canada on the part of France to England, M. de Bougainville, Knight of St. Louis, and Colonel of Infantry, conceived the idea of indemnifying France for this loss if possible, by a discovery of the southern continent; and of those large islands which lie in the way to it. A perusal of Admiral Anson's 'Voyage round the World' fixed his ideas for finding the object of his expedition, and to form a settlement there. He communicated his project to the Ministry who approved it."

¹⁵⁹ Gutiérrez de los Ríos (Count Fernan Nuñez), *Vida de Carlos III*, Madrid, 1898, Part II. ch. 2, p. 229.

Spain or England would watch his expedition with indifference. If he hoped for Spanish acquiescence he was soon disappointed, for on the first news of the establishment of the French settlement within limits which were considered by Spaniards forbidden to other nations, Charles III. caused such warm representations to be made to the French court that the latter yielded to his wishes and despatched Bougainville to Madrid to arrange for the formal cession of the settlement to Spain.¹⁶⁰ By September, 1766, this had been ratified¹⁶¹ and two months later Bougainville set sail from Nantes for a trip round the world commissioned to stop on his way at the Malouines and formally put the Spanish governor in possession of the settlement.¹⁶² The Spanish flag was raised over Port Louis, which forthwith became Port Solidad on April 1, 1767, and henceforth the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands was an Anglo-Spanish problem.

The Spanish and English settlements had continued their separate existences on opposite sides of the archipelago for two and a half years¹⁶³ when in November, 1769, Captain Hunt¹⁶⁴ of Port Egmont, while on a cruise about the islands in the *Tamar* frigate, encountered a Spanish schooner belonging to Port Solidad.¹⁶⁵ Letters which were exchanged between the heads of the

¹⁶⁰ S. P. Spain 174. De Visme to Richmond, 19 May, 1766.

¹⁶¹ S. P. Spain 175. De Visme to Shelburne, 15 September, 1766.

S. P. France 271. Lord George Lennox to Shelburne, 17 September, 1766. Cf. note 140.

¹⁶² S. P. Spain 175. De Visme to Shelburne, 6 and 27 October, 1766.

¹⁶³ S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253 Raynor to Stephens, 2 May, 1769. "Have seen nothing of the French since Captain Jordan's view of their two ships last year from the hills. I saw nothing of them when I was down the coast."

¹⁶⁴ Captain Antony Hunt arrived at Port Egmont in the *Favorite* sloop to relieve Raynor, 1 February, 1769, and Raynor sailed for England, 7 February, 1769. S. P. Spain, supplementary. 253. Raynor to Stephens, 2 May, 1769.

¹⁶⁵ *Papers relative to the late negotiation with Spain and the taking of Falkland Islands from the English*, London, 1771, part I. Captain Antony Hunt, *Tamar* frigate, to Mr. Stephens, Plymouth Sound, 3 June, 1770. "I beg you will be pleased to acquaint my Lords commissioners of the Admiralty, that, being on a cruise off Falkland Islands the 28th of last November, I fell in with a Spanish schooner, taking a survey of them, and on examination found him belonging to a Spanish settlement on the east part, called Port Solidad, in possession of the French in 1767, and by them called Port Louis. Agreeable to my orders, I warned him to quit the islands; in consequence of which he sailed, but in a few days

two settlements after this meeting mutually laid claim to the exclusive proprietorship of the islands and each gave warning to the other to evacuate them.¹⁶⁶ The remonstrances of the governor of Port Solidad were reinforced in February, 1770, by the appearance of two Spanish frigates at Port Egmont, whose commander in a letter to Hunt expressed his surprise at seeing, on his chance entrance into the harbor for water, the British flag flying over a settlement established on a land belonging to his Catholic majesty. While charging Hunt with having violated the peace, the Spaniard said that he would not proceed to further action until he had in hand precise orders from his

after joined me again, in a harbor of the island the settlement is on, with an officer of infantry on board him, and two letters from the Governor of the settlement, which letters, and my answer, I transmit."

¹⁶⁶ *Papere relative to the late negotiation with Spain and the taking of Falkland Islands from the English*, London 1771, pt. I. Enclosed in Hunt to Stephens, 3 June, 1770, are two letters from Don Philip Ruiz Puente governor of Port Solidad, to Captain Hunt, dated 30 Nov., and 12 Dec., 1769; also Hunt to Don Philip Ruiz Puente the 10 and 16 Dec., 1769, as follows:

"Port Egmont, 10 Dec., 1769, Sir, I have received your letter by the officer acquainting me, that these Islands and coast thereof belong to the King of Spain your Master.

"In return I am to acquaint you that the said Islands belong to His Britannic Majesty, my Master, by Right of Discovery, as well as settlement, and that the subjects of no other Power whatever can have any Right to be settled in the said Islands without Leave from his Britannic Majesty, or taking the oaths of Allegiance, and submitting themselves to his Government as subjects to the Crown of Great Britain.

"I do therefore in his Majesty's Name, and by his Orders, warn you to leave the said Islands, and in order that you may be the better enabled to remove your Effects, you may remain six months from the date hereof, at the Expiration of which you are expected to depart accordingly."

"Port Egmont, 16 Dec., 1769. . . . "I must repeat, you and your Colony, together with your Effects are expected to depart from these Islands, within the Limitation specified in my first Letter."

Hunt's official protests on this occasion against the presence of the Spaniards in the Falkland Islands and the earlier protests of McBride to Bougainville de Nerville in direct reference to the presence of the French settlement of Port Louis on East Falkland Island are of special interest in connection with a controversy over the sovereignty of the Falklands which arose in the nineteenth century.

England in 1833 took forcible possession of the Falkland Islands on the basis of her former ownership of these lands and proceeded to establish a colonial government there. The Argentine Republic, which had fallen heir to the Spanish claims to the sovereignty of these islands, and whose citizens were the principal

Catholic majesty.¹⁶⁷ Realizing that these measures were probably the prelude to more serious action and well aware that the force of a frigate and a sloop was utterly inadequate to hold the station, Hunt left for England in March to lay the circumstances before the ministry. He left in command at Port Egmont Captain George Farmer who had recently arrived from England in the *Swift* sloop. A few days after Hunt's departure, Farmer had the misfortune to lose his vessel in a severe gale and this left him with one sloop to guard British sovereignty in the Falklands until reinforcements arrived.

sufferers from the reappearance of the British claims, endeavored to interest the United States government in the controversy, urging that the principle of the Monroe doctrine was at stake. In this connection it was maintained that the question of the sovereignty of the two islands, East Falkland, the home of Port Soledad (formerly Port Louis), and West Falkland of which Port Egmont was the chief settlement, should be kept wholly distinct; that, whatever the British claims might be to West Falkland (these too were disputed), England, previous to 1829, had never made any protest whatever to the exercise of Spanish sovereignty in East Falkland. Cf. Vicente E. Quesada, Argentine minister, to Thomas F. Bayard, United States Secretary of State, Washington, 4 May, 1887 (Vicente E. Quesada, *Recuerdos de mi vida diplomática*, Buenos Aires, 1904, p. 226). In this letter it is stated that "la posesión de la Maluina del este o Soledad, no fué jamas disputada por la Gran Bretaña, hasta la infundada protesta de Sir W. Parish en 1829". The documents referred to in this chapter appear to prove that this is a mistaken view. On the only four occasions on which the representatives of the rival powers met previously to the seizure of Port Egmont by the Spaniards in June, 1770, e.g. McBride's visit to the French settlement in Dec., 1766, Hunt's two encounters with the Spanish vessel from Port Soledad in Nov. and Dec., 1769, and the visit of Don Fernando de Rubalcava to Port Egmont in Feb., 1770, the English office in charge of Port Egmont protested against the presence of the Spaniards and declared the Islands to be British possessions.

¹⁶⁷ *Papers relative to the late negotiation with Spain and the taking of Falkland Islands from the English*, London, 1771, pt. I. Don Fernando de Rubalcava to Captain Hunt, 20 February, 1770. Hunt's reply, ordering the Spaniard to evacuate the islands as possessions of His Britannic Majesty, is dated the same day. Writing to the secretary of the admiralty (Hunt to Stephens, 3 June, 1770), Hunt gives the following account of the visit of Rubalcava; "Two Spanish frigates, the San Catalina of 36 guns, Don Fernando Rubalcava, and the Andaluzia of 30 guns, Don Domingo Perletto, both from Buenos Ayres, with troops for the settlement . . . put into Port Egmont under a pretence of wanting water, which I supplied them with; and after a stay of 8 days they sailed for Port Soledad where I find that St. Arosa, the annual ship, was arrived. I must beg leave to observe that during the stay of the Spanish frigates at Port Egmont, they behaved extremely polite and civil, never attempting to go on shore, tho' I paid the captains and officers the compliment."

Hunt anchored in Plymouth Sound on June 3, 1770. On the following day a single Spanish frigate put in at Port Egmont claiming to be on a journey to Port Solidad and to be in need of water. When four days later four more Spanish vessels arrived the purpose became clear, and on the eighth, the two senior English officers, Captains Farmer and Maltby, ordered the Spanish intruders away.¹⁶⁸ The Spanish commander replied by pointing to the overwhelming force with which he came equipped to enforce his master's right in the Falkland Islands and advised the English to leave without obliging him to resort to force.¹⁶⁹ English officers were invited to board the Spanish vessels

¹⁶⁸ *Papers relative to the late negotiation with Spain and the taking of Falkland Islands from the English*, London, 1771, pt. I. Captain George Farmer to Mr. Stephens, on board the *Favorite*, 22 Sept., 1770. ". . . The fourth of June, the 'Industry' a Spanish frigate, anchored in Port Egmont Harbor, having been, they said, 53 days from Buenos Ayres, put in for water, and bound to Port Soledad. The seventh anchored here four Spanish frigates which had been 26 days from Buenos Ayres, came out in company with the 'Industry' and parted with her four days before. On the arrival of those ships the 'Industry' hoisted a Spanish broad pendant. I now ordered most of the officers and men belonging to the late 'Swift' on shore to defend the settlement, and ordered Captain Maltby to get the 'Favorite' nearer into Jason's cove. One of the Spanish frigates sent an officer on board, to acquaint Captain Maltby, that if he weighed they would fire into him, which he took no notice of but got under sail. The Spanish frigate fired 2 shot which dropt to leeward of the 'Favorite'. . . . Captain Maltby sent an officer on board the Spanish commodore to know the reason why one of the ships under his command had fired two shot at the 'Favorite'; his answer was that they were not fired at the 'Favorite' but as signals to him." Here follows a description of the preparation to defend the settlement. "We now wrote to the Spanish Commodore desiring as he had received the refreshments he stood in need of, that he would depart from hence. His answers with the preparations they were making left us no doubt of their real intention."

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* After preliminary letters on the eighth of June the Spanish commodore addressed an ultimatum to Captains Farmer and Maltby on the ninth: "If you will give me authentic proof that you will quickly and with good will do this (quit this Bay) I will put with peace and quietness my troops on shore and yours will be treated with all consideration . . . and I will permit that you may carry with you all that you have got on shore. . . . But if contrary to all expectation you should be determined to maintain your new establishment I will avail myself of the forces under my command to make you quit the place with the fire of my guns and musquets, and you will be the cause of your own ruin and the fatal consequences of the warm attack that I shall make both by sea and land in order to obtain by force the accomplishment of my orders. . . ." Fifteen minutes were given for a categorical reply.

and inspect the Spanish equipment. Their report that the Spaniards had sixteen hundred men, five frigates, and a formidable train of artillery convinced the English that resistance from one sloop and a wooden blockhouse would be worse than futile,¹⁷⁰ but did not alter their determination to make the Spaniards proceed to such acts of hostility as could not be denied nor explained away. On the tenth of June, when the Spanish force had been actually landed and some shots discharged at the blockhouse and replied to, a flag of truce was hung out and the terms of capitulation were agreed to.¹⁷¹ Under these the English were permitted, after the lapse of some weeks, to proceed to England in their vessel. They arrived at Portsmouth on September 22, some ten days after the secretary of state for the southern department had been informed by the Spanish ambassador that there was good reason to believe that the governor of Buenos Ayres, acting without special instructions, had forcibly dispossessed the English of Port Egmont.

The British ministry was not unprepared for the situation. Captain Hunt's account of events of the preceding winter and spring pointed to some such sequel, while letters from Cadiz and

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* Part II. Captain George Farmer to Stephens, 22 September, 1770.

¹⁷¹ *State Papers relative to the late negotiation with Spain and the taking of the Falkland Islands from the English.* London, 1771, Pt. I. Farmer to Madariaga, 9 June, 1770. "Words are not always deemed hostilities nor can I think you mean in a time of profound peace to put them in execution. . . . I make not the least doubt of your being thoroughly convinced that the King of Great Britain, my Royal Master, has forces sufficient to demand satisfaction in all parts of the globe of any power whatsoever that may offer to insult the British flag. Therefore was the time limited shorter than the fifteen minutes you have allowed me it should make no alteration in my determined resolution to defend the charge committed to me to the utmost of my power."

Captain Farmer in his letter to Mr. Stephens, dated 22 Sept., 1770, gives the following description of events on the morning of the tenth of June:

"The next morning a part of the Spanish troops and artillery landed about half a mile to the northward of us: when they had advanced about half way from where they had landed, the rest of their boats, with the remainder of the troops and artillery put off from one of the Spanish frigates, and rowed right in for the cove, covered by the fire of the frigates whose shot went over the blockhouse. We fired some shot and (not feeling the least probability of being able against such a superior force to defend the settlement) hoisted a flag of truce and desired articles of capitulation which were in part granted."

Madrid had given early information of the arrival of a Spanish ship from Buenos Ayres with the news that when it left the South American port a squadron was fitting out to leave on May 6, for an attack on the British settlement in the Falklands.¹⁷² Weymouth's reply to Masserano's communication was therefore the considered view of the ministry on a situation which had long threatened, and its terms were not modified in the three months of negotiations which followed. In the first interview with the ambassador, the secretary stated that his majesty demanded a "disavowal of the proceedings of his Catholic majesty's servants at Port Egmont in which force had been used against British subjects settled there" and insisted that "the affairs of that settlement should be immediately restored to the state in which they were before such proceedings had been undertaken". The British representative was to repeat the same language at Madrid,

¹⁷² S. P. Spain 184. Braithwaite (captain of H. M. S. *Liverpool*) to Stephens, Cadiz Bay, 14 August, 1770. In Admiralty to Weymouth, 7 Sept., 1770.

Ibid., James Duff to Weymouth, 14 August, 1770, Cadiz. Received 8 Sept. "By the Spanish register ship, the Conception, which arrived on the tenth instant from Buenos Ayres which place she left the 2nd of May, I have received intelligence that a xebecque had been sent by the Governor of the Malouines to Port Egmont to notify to the commanding officer there that the English must evacuate said place as belonging to the King of Spain, which was refused nor were the officers or people of said vessel allowed to land there, tho' supplied with everything they wanted . . . since the return of said vessel to Buenos Ayres an armament has been fitted out there under the command of Mr. Madarriaga consisting of 4 frigates, viz. the *Industria*, *Sta. Cathalina*, *Sta. Barbara*, and *Sta. Rosalia*, and said xebecque which mounts 30 guns, on board of which vessels and a Swedish transport, which arrived from Galicia with stores, 300 men of the regiment of Majorca and the old battalion of Buenos Ayres were embarked and are to proceed 6th May to dislodge the English from the above-mentioned settlement. . . ."

Ibid., Harris to Weymouth, 23 August, 1770. Received 10 September, "The following fact which was brought from Buenos Ayres to Cadiz by the *St. Nicolas de Bary* does not correspond however with these sentiments. It sets forth that in consequence of two of His Catholic Majesty's vessels having touched at Port Egmont, in the month of January and finding it occupied by the English who not only refused to evacuate the place but even denied them admittance, a squadron of 5 frigates with 300 men were destined to sail from thence the sixth of May . . . to dislodge the English."

These reports make clear the close connection of Rubalcava's visit to the later expedition.

adding that when "the rash expedition" had been disavowed it would be in "His Majesty's power to suspend those preparations which under the present circumstances his honour will not permit him to postpone".¹⁷³

Growing steadily worse since the fall of Squillace,¹⁷⁴ relations between England and Spain had at last reached a crisis. The events which took place at Port Egmont in 1770 were not an isolated incident, but the culmination of a long series of hostile measures. In the Falkland Islands episode the spirit which had dictated the refusal of any compromise on the Manila ransom issue,¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ S. P. Spain 185. Weymouth to Harris, 12 September, 1770.

¹⁷⁴ Squillace, Charles' first minister of war and finance, *cf.* p. 338, and note 4. Throughout his official career Squillace opposed a steady opposition to French commercial activities in the Spanish peninsula, frustrating that nation's ambition to supersede the English as the first commercial power in Spain, by insisting on impossible conditions as the price of any concession asked for. At length in March, 1766, the French seized the opportunity offered by the storm of popular fury aroused by the publication of a decree attributed to Squillace, which forbade the wearing within certain areas of the national flopped hats and large capes, to have a demand for the dismissal of the undesirable minister pressed upon the king in such a form that it could not be refused. After the king from the royal balcony had unwillingly promised that the demand of the rioters should be satisfied and Squillace had been despatched in a warship to Sicily, his offices were divided between two Spaniards. The department of finance was given to Don Miguel Mosquiza, a man who had served under Squillace but who failed in the following years to uphold his former chief's ideals. Within a year of his accession to office, the French consul-general, the Abbé Begliardi, was able to depart for France with a draft treaty ensuring certain commercial privileges to the French which, in a modified form, was finally concluded in 1768, under the title of "An Interpretation of Article 24 of the Family Compact". Don John de Muniain replaced Squillace as head of the department of war.

¹⁷⁵ While the overseas interests of England and Spain centered chiefly in America, the possessions and enterprises of the two nations in other parts of their empires furnished notable controversies and incidents in the period under review. In the East Indies the disputes growing out of the conquest of Manila by Great Britain in 1762 provided matters of diplomatic discussion that occupied the official representatives of the two nations for the greater part of five years. The major item of this group of disputes was the Manila ransom controversy. Lord Rochford bore with him to Madrid a copy of the bill of exchange for two millions of dollars which had been drawn on the royal treasury of Madrid by the archbishop of Manila in his capacity of governor of the city as half the ransom price of Manila on its capture by the British on October the sixth, 1762. He was instructed to present this bill to the Spanish government for payment and endeavor to have the money placed on board such English ship of war as might chance to arrive at Cadiz for transmission to England. The ambassador reached

which had denied every application for a *cartel* providing for the exchange of deserting slaves in the West Indies,¹⁷⁶ which had disregarded every suggestion of improvements in the lot of British subjects imprisoned for offenses in America,¹⁷⁷ which had endeavored to confine within the narrowest limits the British right to navigate the waters of the Mississippi,¹⁷⁸ and which had made possible the publication of new trade regulations aimed at the destruction of England's commercial superiority in the Spanish Peninsula,¹⁷⁹ had at last found expression in an open attack on a British settlement, carried out, if not under the direct order of the Spanish court, at least under general instructions confessedly not contrary to an undertaking involving the issues of war or peace.

Considerations which in 1763 had given Rochford so firm a belief

Madrid on 6 Dec., 1763. By the twelfth he had already presented the bill and been told that "His Catholic Majesty would pay no sort of regard to the archbishop's draft on the treasury, that this official might as well have drawn upon the King of Spain to deliver up the kingdom of Grenada". In reply Rochford pointed out that it had been in consequence of the draft that the town had been spared plundering and that "there appeared a want of *bonne foy* in the terms of a capitulation not being complied with". From the positions taken in this first encounter neither party receded. Overshadowed in the first year of Rochford's term of office by a great mass of miscellaneous complaints growing out of the recent hostilities the subject was through the remainder of Rochford's stay in Spain in continuous agitation. When he left for home in May 1766, it was his "real opinion that they have never meant to pay a shilling of the debt unless compelled to it". Although Mr. De Visme, the secretary of the embassy, was instructed, after Rochford's departure, to reply to the Spanish offer to submit the issue along with others to an arbiter, to offer to accept 300,000 pounds, the Spanish government could not be induced to yield. The new ambassador, Sir James Gray, taking office in Dec., 1766, was not more successful. After being told by Grimaldi in Feb. 1768, that His Catholic Majesty "would never pay a single dollar out of his own pocket", the British government dropped the discussion as unprofitable and the account remained unpaid.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. pp. 356, 372-375.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. pp. 382-386.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. pp. 369-371.

¹⁷⁹ Six months after the trade agreement of 1768 between France and Spain (cf. note 174, p. 409), the first of a series of blows at English commerce was struck by the Spanish government in an order dated 8 July, 1768, and published at Cadiz on the twenty-eighth, prohibiting the future importation of all sorts of printed linens. As this trade was almost wholly in the hands of British merchants they regarded the order as primarily aimed at their privileges.

in Spain's desire to keep the peace had already lost some of their force before his departure in the spring of 1766, and had grown weaker with each succeeding year. As the events of the late war receded into the past the Spanish government had tended to return to the state of mind which had made it difficult for France to secure Spanish acquiescence to the conclusion of peace in 1763, namely, the belief that prolonged hostilities would have bettered results. Reform measures introduced in the years which followed the war in the military system in Old Spain,¹⁸⁰ the dispatch of numbers of able men to the colonies, and the steps taken to improve the fortifications in America, to replenish the stores and strengthen the overseas garrisons,¹⁸¹ had fostered greater confidence in Spain's powers of offense and defense. The king and Grimaldi, neither of them soldiers, depended for their views of Spanish military strength on the representations of two famous military men, Count D'Aranda¹⁸² and General O'Reilly,¹⁸³ both professionally

¹⁸⁰ Spain emerged from the Seven Years' War with her "troops in a miserable condition, her fleet worse, and her coffers empty". (S. P. Spain 168. Rochford to Halifax, 2 Nov., 1764). In land forces, Rochford reported in Oct., 1764, that there were supposed to be 102 battalions of infantry, numbering in all 72,590 men, but that these units were far from complete and that not more than 50,000 effective men could be counted. Behind these there was supposed to exist a militia of 33 battalions, numbering 27,990. The cavalry, a national force as contrasted with the infantry which had a large foreign element, numbered 11,192 men. In 1766, a great effort was made to put the infantry on a better basis and a royal decree established new regulations for it, from which the Spaniards hoped that it would soon be upon as good a footing as any infantry force in Europe, but due to the general lack of military spirit, the disproportionate number of officers, the constant practice of not paying the soldiers with a consequent necessity of winking at their custom of engaging in private business, and the fact that the king obviously took no pleasure in his troops, progress was so slow that the English ambassador saw no reason for any anxiety.

¹⁸¹ Cf. pp. 338-344.

¹⁸² Don Pedro Pablo Abarea de Bolea, Ximenez de Urrea, Comte d'Aranda e de Castel Florida; Marquis de Torres, etc., 1719-1798, commanded the Spanish army against Portugal during the Seven Years' War. The failure of the campaign was not attributed to him and in 1764 he was made governor of Valencia and after the riot in Madrid (March 23rd, 1766), he became president of the Council of Castile (April 11) and captain general of New Castile. In June, 1773, he was appointed ambassador to France and continued to hold this office until 1787. In Paris he had the reputation of being always well in advance of the Spanish government in his desire to draw the Bourbon courts into open war with England.

¹⁸³ General O'Reilly on his return from pacifying the new Spanish province of Louisiana in the spring of 1770) Cf. pp. 349, 350, 369-372, was given the

and temperamentally eager for war and inclined to exaggerate Spanish resources. With the growth of confidence in their own powers went renewed faith in the friendship of France and a decline in respect for English strength. The spirit of accommodation that had bestowed Louisiana on a defeated friend and had stood by the decision through years of difficulty,¹⁸⁴ that had transferred the sovereignty of an offending new settlement in the Falklands to an ally,¹⁸⁵ that had strongly supported the Spanish king in his revolutionary measures against the Jesuits and had loyally defended the Duke of Parma against menaces from the papal powers,¹⁸⁶ had received its reward in a heartier adoption of French political views and a warmer faith in French friendship. Constantly urged by Choiseul to prepare for a day of reckoning with Great Britain, the Spanish government in the last years of the sixties entertained no serious doubt that when it wished to try conclusions with the former enemy, it would find its ally ready to support Spanish policy. Like the rest of Europe, Spain utterly failed to comprehend the full extent of the staggering blow that the French power had received in the last phase of her long contest with Great Britain for colonial power. While she failed to revise her estimate of French strength in accordance with the Treaty of Paris, Spain's fear of offending the victor in the late contest had grown fainter as the decade advanced. The numerous changes of ministry which had followed upon the resignation of Pitt had seriously lowered English prestige in the Peninsula. A despotic government could not believe that frequent alterations in an administration dependent on a capri-

important post of governor of Madrid in which office he at once became distinguished for his zeal in advancing the cause of reform in the army.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. pp. 344-350.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. p. 403.

¹⁸⁶ The expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain, 1768, had as an indirect result the excommunication of the Duke of Parma, nephew of the king of Spain. The British ambassador, Sir James Gray, in his secret letter to the Earl of Shelburne, 28 February, 1768 (S. P. Spain 179), referred to the excommunication of the Duke of Parma "as a blow obliquely intended against this court". A month later, 24 March, 1768 (S. P. Spain 179), he wrote that Spain and France "are resolved to act in the most perfect concert in regard to the edict against the Duke of Parma" and added that every new event "affords a fresh instance of their strict union".

cious popular body for favor could pursue a consistent or harmonious public policy. The unfortunate circumstance that, with the exception of less than two years during which Sir James Gray acted as ambassador, English interests in Spain had been represented after Rochford's departure by a minister of no higher character than a chargé d'affaires had increased the tendency to forget the recent display of English strength. Finally, the failure to enforce the closely pressed claim of the Manila ransom, explained by reports from Masserano as due to the British ministry's determination to pursue peace at any cost, and the Spanish ambassador's description of the state of neglect into which the English navy had been allowed to fall, had indirectly diminished respect in Spain for the power which had extorted such humiliating terms at Paris, and had increased the readiness with which Charles III. and his government approached another break with the British nation.

But while Spain was pursuing in 1770 a general course of policy towards England that could hardly fail to result finally in a rupture there seems no evidence that she deliberately prepared in the Falkland Islands incident a conveniently timed *casus belli*. On the contrary, in the summer months which preceded the arrival in Europe of the news of the stirring events occurring at Port Egmont in June, the Spanish government appears to have been in an unusually peaceful frame of mind. Absorbed in issues growing out of the Jesuit controversy, it manifested in the very month after Bucareli's expedition a decided reluctance to respond to a suggestion from the French ally that relations with England might conveniently be brought into the forefront of immediate considerations. In the light of the subsequent course of events, it is interesting to observe that at the time that Bucareli was carrying out his energetic program in the south Atlantic, it was in France that a rupture with England was under contemplation, while in Spain the king and his ministers were still anxious to postpone the struggle to the future and were refusing to give any encouragement to French measures tending towards immediate hostilities.

As ultimately the outcome of the Falkland Islands crisis was to

depend upon the political fortunes of Choiseul, it is of importance to understand his situation in the critical months of the controversy. Never enjoying uncontested power Choiseul found his position growing steadily more precarious after the death of Madame de Pompadour in 1764. Conciliating none of his enemies and unwisely adding to their forces the influence of the new royal favorite, Madame du Barry, Choiseul found himself, by the beginning of 1770 menaced on every hand. His enemies urged upon the king that his minister of war and foreign affairs, in the internal affairs of the kingdom, extended warm sympathy to the *parlements* in the bitter constitutional struggle which these bodies were carrying on with the crown, and added to the difficulties of the state by his extreme extravagance in the department over which he presided. They also condemned every feature of his foreign policy. France, they declared, had reaped nothing but difficulties, poverty, and loss from the Austrian alliance,¹⁸⁷ from the family union with Spain,¹⁸⁸ from the recent acquisition of Corsica,¹⁸⁹ and from the policy pursued of late years in Poland.¹⁹⁰ In proportion as his embarrassments grew

¹⁸⁷ The defensive treaty between France and Austria had been signed 1 May, 1756. For the next thirty years it remained the official rule in the relations between the two powers, although its force was morally broken after 1763—the French cabinet fearing that Austria, on a favorable opportunity, would return to her old connection with England.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Morel Fatio, *Recueil des Instructions*, XII. 340. Following upon a proposal by Choiseul, made in January 1761, that there should be a defensive treaty negotiated between France and Spain and at the same time a treaty of commerce, Grimaldi, in February, proposed an offensive treaty. This encouraged Choiseul to elaborate a project of a treaty which should be at once offensive and defensive. In May, the main outlines of the Pacte de Famille were agreed to and the document was signed on 15 August, 1761. At the same time that the Pacte de Famille was signed a secret convention was concluded by the terms of which his Catholic majesty engaged to declare war against England on 1 May, 1762, if by that time peace had not been established. While signed 15 August, 1761, this convention bears the date 4 February, 1762. For a fuller discussion see Rousseau, F., *Règne de Charles III d'Espagne*, I. ch. 2.

¹⁸⁹ In the summer of 1768, France secured, with the acquiescence of Spain, the important island of Corsica from the Republic of Genoa.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. a document entitled "Précis de faits (de M. Fauier par ordre de Madame du Barry) sur l'administration de M. de Choiseul", Article C among "Pièces Justificatives" in *La Diplomatie de Louis XV et le Pacte de Famille*, par André Soulange-Bodin. Paris, 1894.

greater Choiseul's temptation increased to silence his enemies and render himself indispensable by provoking a war with England. In June, the news of a step taken by the English in India seemed to offer a possible excuse for opening hostilities. At Chandernagore, it appeared that the Compagnie des Indes had surrounded their establishment by a ditch which the English, on the ground that it violated the Treaty of 1763, had forcibly filled in. The chargé d'affaires in London asked for instructions.¹⁹¹ The matter in itself was small and the English ministry was disposed to meet the French government half-way in composing the difficulty, but Choiseul determined not to throw away an opportunity which might be long in offering itself in such an attractive form again. He accordingly sent instructions to Francis to present a firm memorial to the English court which might serve as a basis of either peace or war. By the same post he despatched a letter to D'Ossun, the French ambassador in Madrid, with orders to sound Grimaldi on the subject of a possible rupture with England.¹⁹² Into the struggle which Choiseul was now contemplating he undoubtedly had no intention of drawing Spain, having long since made up his mind as to the dangers and disadvantages of such a course,¹⁹³ but he wished to know what

¹⁹¹ Francis (French chargé d'affaires in London) à Choiseul, 15 June, 1770. L. Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 165.

¹⁹² M. Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 165. Choiseul to D'Ossun, 7 July, 1770. "M. de Fuentes renvoye, Monsieur, un courrier de sa cour, par lequel j'écris à M. le marquis de Grimaldi; je lui mande une nouvelle affaire que nous avons avec les Anglais au sujet d'une insulte qu'un de nos comptoirs a éprouvé de la part de la compagnie anglaise dans le Bengale. Nous allons donner un mémoire sur cet objet à la cour de Londres et nous verrons ce qu'elle répondra à la demande de satisfaction que nous lui faisons que nous serons obligés de nous procurer si le ministère anglais ne nous satisfait point. Cette affaire peut devenir sérieuse . . . en attendant je vous prie de chercher à découvrir ce que pense M. Grimaldi sur cette affaire que je lui explique dans ma lettre et sur les suites qu'elle peut avoir."

¹⁹³ Morel Fatio, *Recueil, Espagne*, XII. 353. Letter from Choiseul to D'Ossun, 16 December, 1764. The French minister pointed out to his lieutenant at Madrid, in upbraiding him for his lack of attention to French commercial interests in Spain that in any political system two points of view were to be considered; the first related to a state of peace, the second of war. If the advantages, wrote Choiseul, which one hoped to gain in the state of war were very great, then one asked little from an ally during peace, but in applying this to the Family

Spain's attitude would be. D'Ossun's reply (dated 23 July, 1770) was discouraging in the extreme. Both his Catholic majesty and his ministry, the French ambassador reported, desired the continuation of peace. They considered that Spain was not yet prepared for war and they thought that the bad state of the French finances made vigorous action, involving the initiative in a new rupture, too great a risk.¹⁹⁴ Choiseul, having in the interval decided against a break on the Indian pretext, observed in his answer, written 20 August, that he perceived clearly that Spain was mortally terrified of any incidents which could lead to war.¹⁹⁵ Events were soon to teach him that the government of Charles III. was not so fearful of war when the issue involved was immediately a Spanish interest.

Four days before Choiseul's despatch was penned, Grimaldi received a letter from M. Bucareli, governor of Buenos Ayres, which had been written on the third of the preceding April, and described in detail the measures which he was then preparing to take against the English settlement in the Falklands.¹⁹⁶ Instantly, lethargy at Madrid was flung aside and Spanish disbelief in the practicability of a new war with England vanished into thin air.

Compact it was clear from the experience of the late war that Spain would be but a dead weight in a period of hostilities on whose forces it would be absurd to count. Her feebleness had been made so apparent, that the first attention of France in a war with England would be, despite the stipulations of the Family Compact, to avoid drawing Spain into the conflict. France could legitimately expect, he thought, to profit commercially in time of peace from the riches of the Spanish peninsula, considering that in time of war she would be faced with the disagreeable necessity of making war in behalf of Spain and of preventing that nation from doing the same in behalf of France.

¹⁹⁴ L. Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 166. D'Ossun to Choiseul, 23 juillet, 1770. " . . . Au reste, Monsieur, croyez en général que Sa Majesté catholique et son ministère désirent infiniment la continuation de la paix et qu'il faut au moins deux ans encore pour que l'Espagne soit en état d'entrer en guerre."

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Choiseul à D'Ossun, 20 Aug., 1770. " . . . Ce que j'ai vue de plus certain dans la réponse qu'a faite M. de Grimaldi a mes communications, c'est que l'Espagne meurt de peur de tous les incidents qui peuvent amener la guerre. Elle rejette en partie sur nous et nos finances cette crainte obligeante, elle a peut-être raison sur le dernier article."

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Flammermont, J., *Le Chancelier Maupeou et Les Parlements*, Paris, 1884, p. 159.

Grimaldi wrote to Fuentes¹⁹⁷ that the situation had completely changed since the departure of the last courier for France; the unjust establishment of the English on the Malouines had become a very serious matter, one which would perhaps produce war; the news had greatly agitated them. The French court, he instructed the ambassador, was to be informed that the king, after consultation with his ministers, had decided to inform the English government of the events which had transpired before this news could reach London from other sources, with a hope of preventing the British from resorting to violent measures and anticipating them in hostilities which neither France nor Spain was in a fit state to undertake. It was desirable, he said, if possible, to avoid a war for an unworthy object.¹⁹⁸ By the same mail, Grimaldi dispatched letters to Masserano which urged him to use every effort to prevent the threatened conflagration.¹⁹⁹

However, D'Ossun's later letters make it clear that as the first excitement subsided at Madrid, the prospect of war was faced with increasing equanimity.²⁰⁰ To the ambassador's amazement,

¹⁹⁷ Don Joaquin Atanasio Pignatelli de Aragon y Mónçayó, etc., Comte de Fuentes, succeeded Grimaldi as Spanish ambassador in France, where he arrived in February, 1764, and continued to represent Charles III. at Paris until 1773. Previous to his post in France Fuentes had been Spanish ambassador in England, 1758-1761. *Recueil des Instructions*, vol. 12, bis, p. 443.

¹⁹⁸ L. Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 167. Grimaldi to Fuentes, 20 August, 1770. "L'établissement injuste des Anglais dans la Malouine est devenue une affaire tres sérieuse. . . . Elle produira peut-être la guerre. Vous pouvez par conséquent imaginer, monsieur, combien notre situation a changé depuis que je vous expédiai mon dernier courrier extraordinaire, il y a huit jours. Cette nouveauté nous a extrêmement agités. Le roi, apres avoir entendu ses ministres, a beaucoup réfléchi sur ce qu'il faudrait faire pour conserver les droits de sa couronne pour retenir les Anglais s'il est possible et pour empêcher qu'ils ne nous anticipent par une guerre que ni la France ni l'Espagne ne sont encore en état d'entreprendre avec une espérance fondée de succès. La résolution que le Roi a poussée dans ce moment critique a été celle d'informer le premier et la cour de Londres de l'expédition de Madariaga dans l'intention d'empêcher que la dite cour prenne un parti violent, comme il est à presumer si elle en était instruite par une autre voie et directement . . . afin d'éviter la guerre pour un objet qui ne le mérite pas."

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.* Grimaldi to Masserano (Spanish ambassador in London), 20 August, 1770.

²⁰⁰ J. Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, Paris, 1884, p. 169. D'Ossun a Choiseul, 3 Sept., 1770. "Vous ne vous seriez pas douté,

Charles III., who had so shortly before deprecated strongly the taking of any measures by France that could result in a rupture, now declared that, while he preferred the way of conciliation, he did not fear war. Two days before Masserano made his disclosure to Weymouth, Grimaldi, then in possession of a full account of events at Port Egmont,²⁰¹ wrote to Fuentes that in his opinion the manner in which the English had been expelled from Port Egmont left little hope that the affair could be arranged without a war, as it was neither to the interests or honor of the crown of Spain to reestablish the English in their settlement.²⁰²

Not only was Charles III. determined to yield nothing essential and had preparations for war well in hand, but by the date of Masserano's disclosure Choiseul had reached the decision not to discourage a rupture. While the question of war had fundamentally changed, and the contemplated hostilities now definitely involved all the dangers he believed inherent in a conflict in which Spain bore the leading part, nevertheless the attacks of his political opponents had attained such violence that, in the view of

monsieur, apres la repugnance manifeste de M. de Grimaldi à l'occasion de cette affaire de Chandernagor que la guerre pourrait etre amenée par les procédés vigoureux de l'Espagne; vous aurez jugé avec raison que le ministère de Madrid redoutait singulièrement tout incident qui pouvait l'occasionner. M. de Grimaldi paraît encore se flatter qu'elle n'aura pas lieu; cependant, il ne néglige rien pour que l'on se mette ici le plus tôt qu'il sera possible en état de la faire offensivement et defensivement."

²⁰¹ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, 13 Sept. 1770. "On the sixth of this month about noon arrived in the Bay of Cadiz the St. Catharine, one of the frigates which is supposed to have been on the expedition to Port Egmont, and the tenth this news was brought here express. As no one has been suffered to go on board or even remain along side her, it is difficult to know from which of the two places she last came; it is however most probable from the latter, and that she brings the news of the good success of the expedition. This conjecture is the more plausible as several councils have since been held, and as M. D'Aranda is come here under pretext of the indisposition of the princess, and proposes staying some days contrary to his usual custom of never sleeping out of Madrid— . . . several couriers have been despatched".

²⁰² L. Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 169. Grimaldi to Fuentes, 10 Sept., 1770. "La manière avec laquelle les Anglais ont été expulsé du port d'Egmont me laisse peu ou point d'espérance d'arranger cette affaire sans une guerre, car il n'est ni de l'honneur de la couronne, ni de ses intérêts de rétablir les Anglais dans le port d'Egmont, chose à laquelle on ne consentira jamais."

observers, he had reached the conclusion that war, under whatever conditions it had to be waged, had become a necessity for his private fortunes. Accordingly, while not openly advocating a rupture he did nothing to forward peace. Writing on the twenty-eighth of August to D'Ossun he said that he had spoken that evening to the king and that the ambassador might assure his Catholic majesty that he could count on all occasions on the king, his cousin.²⁰³ Through the first two weeks of September, the French minister contrived to send vague and on the whole encouraging messages to Madrid pronouncing decisively for neither peace nor war but urging a prompt decision one way or another.²⁰⁴ So sure was the imperial ambassador²⁰⁵ that Choiseul contemplated war in the belief that it would confirm his power, that, in company with Fuentes, he undertook to remonstrate with the French minister, in whose political fortunes both Spain and Austria were so deeply interested, on the folly of pursuing a course so contrary to the king's manifest desire. He wrote to the empress on the nineteenth of September that he and Fuentes believed that they had succeeded in instilling doubts in Choiseul of the wisdom of his policy and that they hoped he would henceforth employ himself in reconciling England and Spain.²⁰⁶ A letter written by Choiseul a week later to D'Ossun reflected the

²⁰³ *Ibid.* Choiseul à D'Ossun, 28 August, 1770. "J'en ai dit un mot le soir au roi et ce que je puis vous assurer, c'est que le roi catholique peut compter dans toutes occasions et de toute manière sur le roi son cousin." Also, Choiseul to D'Ossun, 17 September, 1770.

²⁰⁴ Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, p. 169. Choiseul à D'Ossun, 17 Sept., 1770. "Vous connaîtrez les sentiments du roi sur la circonstance présente: vous en conférerez avec M. le Marquis Grimaldi; je crois que la paix ou la guerre sont à la disposition de l'Espagne; vous ne négligerez rien pour m'instruire du parti que prendra l'Espagne, et vous lui ferez sentir que, quelque parti qu'elle prenne, celui de la paix étant préférable il faut qu'elle se détermine promptement, afin de n'avoir pas à combattre les incidents du Parlement qui s'assemblera au mois de Novembre."

²⁰⁵ Le Comte de Mercy-Argenteau.

²⁰⁶ Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, p. 170. Mercy à l'impératrice-reine, 19 Sept., 1770. "Je n'ai pas lieu de douter que le duc de Choiseul ait cru que la guerre pourrait l'affermir et rendre son ministère nécessaire: aussitôt que me suis aperçu de cette idée, j'en ai dévoilé toutes les conséquences à l'ambassadeur d'Espagne et agissant de concert, je me flatte que nous sommes parvenus à convaincre le duc de Choiseul de la fausseté de son calcul."

new spirit of hesitation. Instead of emphasizing the earlier advice of a quick decision he begged the French representative to use his utmost efforts to induce the Spanish government to postpone decided action for the moment. Even if Spain were determined on war, the English demands for the moment should, he urged, be acceded to. France, he said, must have time to get back some 8,000 sailors from the Newfoundland fisheries, and have time to provision her fleet; later the question of the sovereignty of the islands could be permitted to provide an excuse for a rupture, when France, forewarned, could be relied on to be ready and at the king of Spain's service in a satisfactory manner.²⁰⁷ At the time that this letter was being despatched, Grimaldi had placed before him the English government's answer to Masserano's disclosure.

The official British representative at Madrid at this critical period was James Harris,²⁰⁸ better known under his later title of Lord Malmesbury. Appointed secretary of the embassy at Madrid through the influence of Lord Shelburne in the autumn of 1767, he had been left as chargé d'affaires when ill health had compelled Sir James Gray²⁰⁹ to leave Spain in August, 1769.

²⁰⁷ Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, pp. 171, 172. Choiseul à D'Ossun, 26 Sept., 1770. "Dans tous les cas surtout après la première démarche du prince de Masserano, il n'y a pas de doute qu'il faut accorder les deux propositions anglaises, quand même l'on voudrait en Espagne faire la guerre. Je vous observerai au reste que nous avons huit mille matelots à la pêche de Terre-Neuve qui ne reviendront qu'à la fin d'Octobre . . . et, qu'il faut au moins trois mois pour préparer des vivres pour notre flotte, pour les troupes que nous avons à envoyer en Amérique et en Asie, ainsi que pour l'Approvisionnement des habitants des colonies. . . . Ainsi donc, même avec le projet de la guerre, il faut acquiescer, à ce que je pense, aux propositions anglaises, sauf après, si l'on veut la guerre en Espagne, de la faire arriver dans la discussion du droit de souveraineté sur les îles Malouines; alors, étant prévenus des projets de l'Espagne, nous serons prêts de tous côtés et je puis assurer le roi d'Espagne que nous serons prêts et à ses ordres d'une manière satisfaisante." At the same time Choiseul wrote to Grimaldi directly.

²⁰⁸ Besides his despatches included among the State Papers relating to Spain, the *Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, first Earl of Malmesbury*, ed. by the third Earl of Malmesbury, London, 1844, are of some interest for this phase of his life.

²⁰⁹ Sir James Gray succeeded the Earl of Rochford as British ambassador at Madrid. His instructions were dated 26 June, 1767, but he did not arrive in the Spanish capital until the following October.

Thus when the Falkland Islands incident became a matter of diplomatic controversy between England and Spain in the middle of September, 1770, Harris, although then but a youth of twenty-four, had carried the full burden of responsibility for more than a year. On September 3, he had written to the home office that as there seemed every prospect that some time would elapse before he should have a principal, it would be to the advantage of the interests he was charged with if he were given a higher diplomatic character.²¹⁰ The outbreak of the Falkland dispute prevented his request from being acceded to, but his able handling of the delicate matters which this crisis threw into his care was to establish his diplomatic reputation and win for him in his twenty-fifth year a diplomatic post of the first rank.²¹¹

The courier, bearing Weymouth's letter demanding disavowal and restitution, reached San Ildefonso on September 24. The evening of the following day, Harris had a long interview with Grimaldi. The Spanish minister's reply to the terms of the memorial²¹² which Harris presented was couched in very vague words. The English, he said, had had reason to foresee the occurrence of such an event as that which had just taken place at Port Egmont since Spanish disapprobation of the English establishment on the Falklands was notorious and had frequently been a subject of discussion.²¹³ He was, however,

²¹⁰ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Robert Wood, 3 Sept., 1770.

²¹¹ James Harris, *Diaries and Correspondence*, London, 1844. In 1771 he was appointed minister plenipotentiary to Prussia. He was later the British representative in Russia, and, still later, at the Hague. His death occurred in 1820. M. de Talleyrand once observed to Harris' grandson, "Je crois que Lord Malmesbury était le plus habile ministre que vous aviez de son temps."

²¹² S. P. Spain 185. Dated San Ildefonso, 25 Sept., 1770. Enclosed by Harris to Weymouth.

²¹³ The subject had been a matter of diplomatic discussion in 1766 and 1767 in connection with the settlement of the Manila ransom issue. After Rochford's departure from Spain in May, 1766, he became the British ambassador at the French court and from this post continued to attempt to devise a means of inducing Spain to pay the Manila ransom money. For a time it was believed that Spain's anxiety to prevent an English settlement on the Falklands could be made to serve this purpose. Choiseul was repeatedly assured that the one means of inducing the British government to desist from the Falkland undertaking was for Spain to pay the ransom in full. The French minister on his part pressed the British to accept the Spanish offer to submit all matters in dispute between the

exceedingly sorry that the affair had taken place. The moment that they had learned that it was intended they had despatched a vessel from Coruña with orders to prevent it. Unfortunately, the boat had arrived too late. Nevertheless he could not blame the conduct of Bucareli, founded as it was on the established law of America. But, Spain being desirous of peace and having much to lose by war, as far as His Catholic Majesty's own honor and the welfare of his people were compatible with the British demand, the latter would be agreed to. Three days later Harris was taken aside and assured that his memorial had been laid before the king who was resolved to do everything in his power to terminate the affair in an amicable manner. He admitted the English demand and assented to its every point, consistent with his honor, which, as well as England's, was to be considered. Orders, Harris, was informed, had been sent to Prince Masserano to lay before the British government several ideas which had been suggested and which as they differed from the British in terms and not in essentials, he trusted would be adopted.²¹⁴

Commenting on this reply in a letter to Choiseul dated September 27, D'Ossun remarked that Spain had made a response to England which would permit the continuation of negotiations.²¹⁵ Many considerations combined in the closing days of September to render delay in the march of events agreeable to the Spanish minister. Besides the great advantage of a longer period in which to prepare for possible hostilities, a prolongation of negotiation promised the necessary time for the many obscure political factors of the situation to declare themselves.

two courts to an arbiter and urged that if Louis XV. were chosen England should have the ransom on the condition that she would desist from her colonizing activities in the Falklands. When it became evident that the English government would not consent to the mediation of the King of France and would give no permanent assurance in reference to the Falklands, the discussion gradually subsided and France extricated herself from the Falkland Islands controversy by formally handing these islands over to Spain in April, 1767. Cf. S. P. France 272, Rochford to Shelburne, 13 Jan. 1767, 12 and 18 Feb., 1767; Shelburne to Rochford, 23 Jan., 1767.

²¹⁴ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, 28 Sept., 1770.

²¹⁵ J. Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, Paris, 1883, p. 162. D'Ossun to Choiseul, 27 September, 1770.

Choiseul's views and the dependence to be placed on the French ally were far from clear. While Grimaldi could reassure himself by the reflection that since the last peace with England the burden of the French colleagues' correspondence had been the urgent need for the two allied crowns to prepare for a renewal of hostilities, he could recall that as recently as July, Choiseul had been ready for an immediate declaration and had written D'Ossun that France was in a better state to sustain war than Spain, being absolutely prepared in every physical way with the exception of ready money which, however, he had added, was never lacking in France when real necessity for expenditure arose.²¹⁶ The tenor however of the letters and messages received since the beginning of the Falkland crisis had been of a curious, non-committal, and disquieting character. While not discouraging a rupture, Choiseul had left the decision of war or peace to Spain and had failed to commit himself to definite promises concerning French support in the event of hostilities. Moreover, features in the political situation in Spain made a period of negotiation desirable to Grimaldi. The king's conscience, he knew, would not be satisfied unless his majesty could point to some efforts made by his government in the direction of peace, although the success of the war party in making Charles believe that his own and the nation's honor was involved in the issues of the Falkland incident ensured that the advances could not be of too conciliatory a character. The consideration that war meant the further aggrandizement of Aranda and O'Reilly, whose influence had been growing in an alarming manner since the fall of Squillace, provided another argument against too great haste in rushing into hostilities.

That Grimaldi, however, looked upon the concessions which Masserano at the close of September was authorized to make as merely a temporary expedient calculated to prevent surprises until he should have the situation better in hand, may be judged from the immense impression which the receipt of Choiseul's letter of September 26 made upon him. In a letter

²¹⁶ J. Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, Paris, 1883, p. 158. Choiseul to D'Ossun, 20 August, 1770.

to Weymouth dated October 4, Harris gave an account of an interview he had had with the Spanish minister immediately after the arrival of the express from Fontainebleau.²¹⁷ The letter from France, Grimaldi had told the English representative, had informed him of the apprehensions of the French court on the naval armament which England was making. "He spoke to me upon it," wrote the chargé d'affaires, "with a degree of alarm and impetuosity I never found in him. He said it was an ill return to the early intelligence they had given of the expedition to the Falkland Islands, that he would consider it as a lesson for the future and not again by his frankness draw himself into a situation to incur the censure of his master and the reproach of his allies. He could not but suppose we were meditating some treacherous stroke by the warmth with which we had given these orders and the celerity with which they were executed. In a word, my lord, it would be very [amazing]²¹⁸ to you to read the strange inconsistent sallies passion induced him to make." Having first read Choiseul's clear indication that immediate French aid might not be forthcoming and his plain advice to agree at least for the moment, to the English demands, there was doubtless a ring of sincerity in Grimaldi's exclamation "I hope in God and I call Heaven to witness that I desire nothing so much as peace and dread nothing so much as war". From this conversation and the general bearing of the ministers Harris "perceived the great consternation, and that, so far from having a design to break with us, they fear nothing so much as our breaking with them and would do anything to palliate the present affair".

Once comprehending that Choiseul considered a further postponement of the day of reckoning with England desirable, Grimaldi bent his efforts to secure this end, but, as he wrote to his French colleague two months later, he found himself surrounded by almost insurmountable embarrassments. All other members of the ministry were unanimous in the view that without sacrificing his honor the king could not agree to the English demands. His attempts to win the king to concessions were described by

²¹⁷ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, separate, 4 October, 1770.

²¹⁸ Word omitted in the MS.

his enemies as a disregard of the king's and the nation's honor and a submission to anything that pleased France, were it white or black. He was not, he told Choiseul, master to guide matters to the point that he would wish, and he doubted if anyone in the world could succeed in leading the king in matters in which he believed his honor interested or his dignity compromised.²¹⁹ Through the early days of October, the war party was especially active in forcing Grimaldi along the path towards open hostilities. Military and naval preparation, which had been secretly in progress since the first news of Bucareli's action,²²⁰ became so open that they could not be denied when Harris broached the subject to Grimaldi.²²¹ On the eighteenth of the month the chargé d'affaires reported that three great bodies of troops were forming in Murcia, Andalusia, and Galicia for the purpose of covering the three important ports of Cartagena, Cadiz, and Ferrol.²²² General O'Reilly, in charge of these operations, was in "the highest favor."²²³ As the month advanced, however, and no encouragement came from France, Harris believed that Grimaldi's pacific views gained ground "while D'Aranda's violent advice lost credit". On the eighteenth, he "had good reason to believe that His Catholic Majesty is inclined personally

²¹⁹ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, p. 179. D'Ossun to Choiseul, 20 December, 1770. "L'objet principal de M. le Comte d'Aranda et de ses adhérents est de discréditer le Marquis de Grimaldi dans l'esprit de la nation espagnole et de le faire regarder comme vendu à la France et comme peu jaloux de l'honneur de la gloire et des intérêts de la monarchie." Cf. also Grimaldi to Choiseul, 24 December, 1770. (Blart, pp. 182, 183.)

²²⁰ J. Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, Paris, 1883, p. 160. D'Ossun à Choiseul, 27 août, 1770.

²²¹ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, separate, 11 Oct., 1770. "Having good reason to believe that the ministry here were about to send orders to the several ports to arm such ships as they could, I yesterday waited on M. Grimaldi and easily perceived from his conversation that my conjectures were not ill-founded. He told me His Catholic Majesty was brought to this extremity by our armaments still being continued and that although he would avoid war and was ready to sacrifice anything but his honour to preserve peace, yet his Kingdom was not so reduced as to suffer himself to be menaced."

²²² S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, 18 October, 1770. (Private and separate.)

²²³ *Ibid.* "Generally O'Reilly who is in the highest favour seems to direct all these military operations."

to come to an accomodation with us at almost any rate and that these, from the little encouragement given him by France on the occasion, are the sentiments of Grimaldi."²²⁴ He added, "M. D'Aranda, a warm enterprising man, is of the contrary opinion and went so far as to call M. Grimaldi before the King, an indolent, lazy minister. This has bred ill blood between them, and M. D'Aranda, though he assists at the councils, takes very little share. General O'Reilly I look upon as of the same opinion as M. D'Aranda, for although they are by no means well together, yet they would both find their advantage in a war. The rest of the ministers are only consulted *pro forma* and very little weight is paid to what they say."

On October 25 a courier arrived at Madrid with despatches for Harris dated the seventeenth of the month which set forth the British answer to the Spanish proposals. "Prince Masserano," wrote Weymouth, "has proposed a convention in which he is to disavow any particular orders given to M. Bucareli upon this occasion, at the same time that he is to acknowledge that he acted agreeably to his general instructions and to his oath as Governor. He is further to stipulate the restitution of the Falkland Islands and he expects that His Majesty is to disavow the menace of Captain Hunt, which, he says, gave occasion to the steps taken by the Spanish Government." The secretary expressed "His Majesty's great surprise and concern at a proposition so inadequate to the satisfaction demanded", and ordered the chargé d'affaires to tell the Spanish minister that "when the King's moderation condescended to demand of the Court of Madrid to disavow the proceedings of the Governor of Buenos Ayres and to restore things precisely to that situation in which they stood before the rash and unwarrantable undertaking of the Governor as the smallest reparation for the injury received that he could possibly accept, His Majesty thought there was nothing left for discussion except the mode of carrying that disavowal and that restitution into execution". The Spanish government was to be informed that "His Majesty adheres invariably to his first demand and that, without entering into the insurmountable,

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

objection to the matter of this proposed convention the manner alone is totally inadmissible, for His Majesty cannot accept under a convention that satisfaction to which he has so just a title without entering into any engagements in order to procure it, that the idea of his becoming a contracting party upon this occasion is entirely foreign to the case, for having received an injury and demanded the most moderate reparation of that injury, his honor will permit him to accept, that reparation loses its value if it is to be conditional and to be obtained by any stipulation whatsoever on the part of His Majesty."²²⁵ In an accompanying secret despatch Harris was given permission to leave the original letter with Grimaldi.

When the contents of this despatch were laid before him, the Spanish minister expressed concern that the British court had not been satisfied with the concession offered. "I wish to God I knew what you expect," he exclaimed, "I thought we had done so much there remained nothing for us to do. We have allowed ourselves in the wrong, have offered the most ample reparation. Surely it is very hard that at that point where we are insulted you will not listen to our solicitations although they are such as you might acquiesce in without the least diminution of satisfaction we give you."²²⁶ A week later Grimaldi informed Harris that fresh instructions were being sent Prince Masserano and read the despatch for England to him. Harris wrote to Weymouth that the minister seemed willing to agree to everything we demand except our not disavowing the menace of Captain Hunt.²²⁷

From France, Choiseul, on hearing the purport of the British reply, urged both Grimaldi and D'Ossun to put forth renewed efforts to maintain the peace. In his despatch to D'Ossun he asked the ambassador as a personal service to himself to use his credit with Charles III. to secure the required concessions.²²⁸

²²⁵ S. P. Spain 185. Weymouth to Harris, 17 October, 1770.

²²⁶ *Ibid.* Harris to Weymouth, 7 November, 1770.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 173. Choiseul à D'Ossun, 21 Octobre, 1770. "Vous ferez ce que vous pouvez, monsieur, pour faire adopter cet avis, et vous rendrez un grand service et à la cause générale et à moi en particulier."

The French minister, the comte de Mercy explained to Prince Kaunitz (the Austrian chancellor), was beginning to realize that without money, credit, or generals, it was not wise to undertake war and was attempting to calm the war spirit in Spain.²²⁹ That he still occasionally revolved in his mind the possibility of war as a way out of political embarrassments at home was evidenced by such a reflection as that which occurred in a letter to D'Ossun of October 24, in which, after urging the ambassador to try to induce Spain to keep the peace, he remarked that French financial affairs were going from bad to worse, but their military and naval preparations were very satisfactory; given time, he said, all would be well, the essential thing was not to hurry. In the council meetings the French minister steadily upheld the view that if Charles III. eventually decided for war France must not denounce the Family Compact, but render support and that therefore adequate preparations for possible hostilities were necessary. As the autumn advanced, his position became more precarious. At the close of November he told Fuentes that he feared that his enemies would succeed in persuading the king, not indeed to break the Family Compact completely, but to abandon the king of Spain on this occasion to his own resources.²³⁰ On November 29 and again on December 2, the king deliberately closed the council meeting when his ministers brought forward the question of French military preparations. A week later the king gave still clearer indication of his disapproval of the course which the long Spanish dispute was taking when, on Fuentes venturing to call his attention to the great necessity for military preparations in France, his majesty merely looked at the Spanish ambassador fixedly and then turned his back without replying.²³¹

²²⁹ D'Arneth et Flammermont, *Correspondance secrète du Comte de Mercy-Argenteau aux l'Empereur Joseph II et le Prince de Kaunitz*, II. Paris, 1891. Mercy à Kaunitz, 20 October, 1770. "M. de Choiseul commence cependant à se persuader que sans argent, sans crédit, et sans généraux, il n'est pas conseillable de faire la guerre. Il tâche maintenant de l'éviter et de calmer, en Espagne, des rodomontades, desquelles il avait lui-même donné l'exemple."

²³⁰ Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, p. 168. Mercy à Kaunitz, 2 December, 1770. Résumé of this letter.

²³¹ *Ibid.* Paris, 1883. pp. 169-171. Mercy to Kaunitz, 18 Dec., 1770. Résumé of this letter.

Made in this way to realize the imminent danger of repudiation before the eyes of all Europe of the instrument which he regarded as the chief work of his administration and the very ground work of French foreign policy, and knowing that Spanish negotiations in London were at an end, Choiseul took the step of sending a new project of accommodation to Francis and Masserano with instructions to lay it before the British ministry.²³² By its terms the English demands were compiled with, but in the disavowal the name of Bucareli was omitted and the discussion of the proprietary right to the islands was formally reserved. In excusing himself to Grimaldi in a letter of December 10 for having thus intervened in a matter which primarily concerned Spain he asked his Spanish colleague to reflect that while the Falkland Islands belonged to Spain, the accessory of the affair, war, would belong to France as well as Spain.²³³ In making this final effort to adjust the dispute Choiseul had very little hope of its success, but he would have, as he wrote to D'Ossun, the satisfaction of knowing that he had done what he could.

All Europe, including the two courts most concerned, believed that hostilities were on the point of breaking out.²³⁴ Matters had indeed reached a crisis. On November 26, Weymouth had written to Harris that as Masserano "continued to hold language which gives very little reason to expect just satisfaction" he was, as privately as possible, to apprise the lieutenant governor of Gibraltar of the uncertain state of affairs, letting him know that General Cornwallis and other

²³² Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 177.

²³³ *Ibid.* p. 178. Choiseul to Grimaldi, 10 December, 1770. "Vous serez peut-être fâché contre moi, mon cher camarade, que j'aie envoyé à Londres un projet sur un objet qui regarde directement l'Espagne, aussi simple et un peu contraire, dans la forme, à vos instructions. Songez, mon cher camarade, que les îles Falkland appartiennent à l'Espagne, mais que tout l'accessoire de l'affaire, mais que la guerre appartiendra à la France comme à l'Espagne."

²³⁴ Add. MSS. 35500 Hardwicke Papers 152. "Extracts from Lord Stormont's and Mr. L. Anglois' Correspondences with H. M. Secretaries of State for the Northern Department". Vol. I, 1763-1771. Stormont (British ambassador at Vienna), to Rochford, 8 Dec., 1770. "Prince Kaunitz, and afterwards the Emperor himself, expressed to me [Lord Stormont] their uneasiness lest the disputes between England and Spain should kindle a general flame." Austria as the ally of France took a special interest in the course of the dispute.

officers belonging to that garrison had been ordered to their posts, and was also to inform the consuls of "the danger of a rupture".²³⁵ Weymouth represented the most moderate opinion in the British parliament on the situation. Since the king's speech to both houses of parliament on the thirteenth of November which declared his majesty's intention of not discontinuing warlike preparations until "I shall have received proper reparation for the injury, as well as satisfactory proof, that other powers are equally sincere with myself in the resolution to preserve the general tranquillity of Europe",²³⁶ the opposition, headed by Chatham and Richmond, had given the government no peace on the Spanish question. In the debate on the address and, a week later, in the debate on the motion, introduced by the Duke of Richmond on November 22, which called for the production of all papers bearing on the seizure of the Falkland Islands, the outrage was declared to be the natural consequence of the English government's passive attitude on the annexation of Corsica by France and the wretched state into which the forces of the Empire had been allowed to fall. The management of the crisis itself was violently attacked as cowardly and pusillanimous to the last degree. Why, speech after speech asked, had nothing been done in the summer months between Hunt's arrival on June 3 and the appearance of the *Favourite* on September 12, when a decisive stroke at that time might have brought into English ports the Newfoundland ships and the sailors of the enemy, and have at one stroke ruined their marine? Why were preparations progressing so slowly at the moment and why was the government in such a cowardly manner attributing the violence to the act of a Spanish governor and not boldly treating it as aimed at the British empire

²³⁵ S. P. Spain 185. Weymouth to Harris (no. 16), 28 Nov., 1770. This letter reached Madrid on December 10, and a messenger was at once despatched to Cadiz with a letter for the English consul, Hardy, "apprizing him of the present precarious state of affairs". Under cover of this letter, others for the lieutenant governor of Gibraltar were enclosed which Hardy was desired to forward "by sea should immediate opportunity offer or direct my servant how to get there without exposing himself to discovery, in passing the lines at St. Rocco". Cf. *Ibid.* Harris to Weymouth, 10 Dec., 1770.

²³⁶ Annual Register, 1770. p. 252.

by His Catholic Majesty?²³⁷ While Weymouth's objection to the Duke's motion on the ground that it was ill timed and that the negotiations then in progress were of a "nature too tender to undergo the general inspection of every power in Europe" was sustained, his appeal to his hearers to recollect that "conquests were seldom made except at an expense exceeding their intrinsic value" and his confession that for his part war brought "such horror to his imagination" that he wished to "procrastinate the period of calamity as long as honour would justify delay"²³⁸ obviously met with little sympathy. This debate drove home the conviction which he expressed to Masserano when he told the ambassador toward the close of November that no English minister could without danger to himself modify the two original demands. In harmony with this view Choiseul's compromise was rejected and the French chargé d'affaires in London wrote home on the fourteenth of December that if war was to be prevented it was necessary to subscribe to the British ultimatum without delay, otherwise peace would hardly last beyond the first days of January.²³⁹

Meanwhile the reports from Spain spoke of the increasing appearance of war.²⁴⁰ The French and English ambassadors both wrote to their respective courts that everywhere military preparations were being pushed forward with the greatest speed

²³⁷ Parliamentary History, vol. 16. Speeches of Colonel Barré, p. 1039, of Edmund Burke, p. 1044, of the Duke of Richmond, p. 1084, of the Earl of Chatham, p. 1091.

²³⁸ *Ibid.* Vol. 16, p. 1082.

²³⁹ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 179. Francis to Choiseul, 14 December, 1770. Résumé of this letter.

²⁴⁰ S. P. Spain 185. On November 7, 1770, Harris reported to Weymouth that orders had been given for the fitting out of 32 sail of the line which were to be divided into 3 squadrons and that the disposition of the Spanish naval forces in Europe were as follows: At Cartagena 3 sail of the line and 2 frigates; at Cadiz 5 sail of the line and 4 frigates; at Ferrol 24 sail of the line and 8 frigates. Few of the vessels at this latter port, the chargé d'affaires wrote, were equipped for sea.

Ibid. 186. On January 13, 1771, Harris wrote to the secretary of state that there were at that time two fleets ready to sail. One was at Cadiz and consisted of 8 or 10 ships and was reported to be for Havana, the other which was at Ferrol (whose number he did not mention) was said to be destined for the business of protecting the coast of Old Spain.

and that the militia was being incorporated in the regular forces. The ports, especially Cadiz, were having their fortifications strengthened, transports bearing troops for America were being constantly despatched while all warships were under orders to be fitted out with the greatest expedition and the impressing of seamen was in progress.²⁴¹ Consul Hardy reported from Cadiz that many circumstances induced him to believe that his Catholic majesty had a scheme in cogitation against Gibraltar, and that it was certain that a French engineer of note had laid a plan for the capture of the place before the king who was believed in Cadiz so anxious to carry that favorite point that he would "be willing to sacrifice half his kingdom to succeed in it".²⁴² A letter from Grimaldi, dated December 6, demanding advice from France on certain military details and precise information as to what help would be forthcoming from Spain's ally made the prospect even clearer to Choiseul. Did the French minister think that a declaration of war was necessary? Was it his opinion that Spain should commence hostilities? Would the French at once do the same and what precisely were the projects of the French government? Would French privateers be placed on the seas? Would the French war vessels be sent out? What was the exact number of these and where were they? Did France wish to undertake an expedition against Jamaica immediately?²⁴³

That the responsibility for the prevalence of the war spirit at Madrid was emphatically not Grimaldi's but rested on the war party which had succeeded in persuading the king to their way of thinking that his honor was involved, was the clear opinion of both the French and British representatives. Harris expressed himself in the following terms in a letter written to the secretary of State on December 17: "Grimaldi, I am convinced, will

²⁴¹ For other English accounts of the military preparations in prospect, see the following despatches: S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, 26, 29 Nov., 6, 13, 17, 27 Dec., 1770, and Hardy (Consul at Cadiz) to Weymouth, 3, 26 Dec., 1770, and J. Banks (Consul at Coruña) to Weymouth, 31 Dec., 1770.

²⁴² S. P. Spain 185. Hardy to Weymouth, 26 December, 1770.

²⁴³ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, p. 178. Grimaldi à Fuentes, 6 December, 1770.

strain every nerve to accommodate affairs not either from conviction or from a pacific disposition but because France wishes it and because he receives repeated instances from M. de Choiseul to effect it. Nevertheless I fear the restless and ambitious temper of M. D'Aranda²⁴⁴ who has on the one hand represented to the king that the honour of the Spanish nation would be exposed by acceding to our propositions and on the other has painted the state of both its army and finances in the most flattering (and I may venture to add) false colours and at the same time has artfully insinuated that we are by no means in a similar condition. I fear these arguments will have more weight than they ought and will greatly obstruct if not totally prevent an amiable conclusion."²⁴⁵ The French ambassador writing three days later to his government emphasized the fact that Grimaldi's position was very delicate, the advice of his colleagues and of D'Aranda, whose chief object was to discredit Grimaldi, being for war; these men, the French representative said, had inspired the nation to desire war with an ardor which approached enthusiasm. His Catholic majesty was greatly affected by the hauteur of the British ministry and although the king said that he desired the maintenance of peace, D'Ossun believed that he really inclined to war.²⁴⁶

The effect of the situation on the Family Compact drew very similar comments from D'Ossun and Harris. The Englishman wrote on November 26, "The little share the Court of France takes in this present dispute and the imperious manner in which it has treated this nation has rendered its alliance more odious than ever to the Spaniards. They use no bounds in decrying the French and the friendship of the French,"²⁴⁷ and again six weeks later he wrote, "People here are more disgusted

²⁴⁴ Cf. Note 182, p. 411.

²⁴⁵ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, 17 Dec., 1770.

²⁴⁶ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, p. 179. D'Ossun à Choiseul, 20 Dec., 1770. "Le roi catholique est vivement affecté de la hauteur du ministère britannique. Il a des anciens griefs contre les Anglais et de plus de la propension aux sentiments des anciens chevaliers, et quoique ce monarque dise qu'il désire le maintien de la paix j'oserais croire qu'il incline intérieurement pour la guerre."

²⁴⁷ S. P. Spain 185. Harris to Weymouth, 26 November, 1770.

than ever with the French alliance and in their conversation put no bounds to their manner of decrying it".²⁴⁸ On December 10, D'Ossun warned Choiseul that if his Catholic majesty sacrificed personal sentiment in consideration of these facts—that France was not in a state to go to war, "notre consideration ici subira une furieuse atteinte."²⁴⁹

By December 22, Charles III. had decided to endeavor to bring matters to an issue with his delinquent ally by writing a personal letter to Louis XV. In this epistle he reminded the French king that the Spanish order of 1764 bearing on the establishments which the English were seeking to make in South America had been only despatched after it had received the approval of his Christian majesty and his ministers.²⁵⁰ It was this order which had provoked the present difficulty. As in this instance, so it had since been his practice, knowing the desire of the French king to maintain peace, not only to overlook an infinity of injustices from the hands of the English and to take the greatest care to prevent pretexts for quarrels from occurring, but even to take no resolutions which might conceivably lead to

²⁴⁸ S. P. Spain 186. Harris to Weymouth, 13 January, 1771.

²⁴⁹ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, p. 178. D'Ossun à Choiseul, 10 December, 1770. Two weeks later, 24 Dec., 1770, D'Ossun wrote to Choiseul (Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, pp. 191, 192), "C'est une chose surprenante que cette nation à qui nous reprochions avec raison d'avoir une haine invétérée pour la France et une inclination marquée pour les Anglais ait adopté, dans un instant des sentiments tout à fait contraires; Les villes, les provinces, le haut clergé, les moines, le public, offrent à l'envie leurs biens, leur revenue, leurs personnes pour faire la guerre à l'Angleterre." Cf. the contrary view of popular opinion: S. P. Spain 185, Hardy (consul at Cadiz) to Weymouth, 31 Dec., 1770. "I landed at Cadiz amidst a crowd of people rejoicing on a supposition that my coming was a certain signal of peace."

²⁵⁰ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, p. 181. Charles III. to Louis XV. 22 Dec., 1770. ". . . J'ai non seulement dissimulé une infinité d'événements injustes, contraires aux traités et au droit des gens de la part des Anglais, mais j'ai eu le plus grand soin d'éloigner tout prétexte à cette nation de nous chercher querelle, ne prenant même aucune résolution qui put induire de loin un prétexte aux Anglais de nous faire la guerre sans la consulter auparavant avec Votre Majesté, en avoir son approbation. Tel a été l'ordre que je donnais en 1764 à l'égard des établissements que les Anglais cherchaient à faire dans l'Amérique Méridionale. Il fut trouvé convenable, nécessaire pour Votre Majesté, son ministère, et sur le consentement que j'en reçus il fut expédié. C'est pourtant cet ordre même qui causa la querelle présente et qui sert de prétexte . . . "

disputes without first consulting the French king. In the present difficulty there were no expedients which he had not adopted to satisfy English pride, going just as far in that direction as the honor and dignity of his crown would permit. He thought, however, that this temper had contributed to render the English ministry more difficult. Nothing had satisfied that country which wished a humiliation which would discredit French and Spanish power in the world. Nevertheless, the French ministry had intimated that it was necessary to go beyond these considerations and think only of the moment without considering the future. He was, however, convinced that the French king was as jealous in these matters as himself. While he was willing to accede to any expedient which did not directly wound his honor or dignity, he believed that if a way still remained of securing peace, it was to be found in adopting a contrary system to that which the French ministry had hitherto pursued, in other words to accelerate the French preparations for war. He closed with an appeal to the French king to have the Spanish ambassador informed of the nature of these so that the French and Spanish measures and armaments might be combined.²⁵¹

This action on the part of Charles III. came too late to affect the course of events. Before the despatch had left Madrid, both the English and the French courts had taken decisive action. In England Lord Weymouth²⁵² resigned the seals of the southern department on December 18,²⁵³ and was succeeded in office

²⁵¹ L. Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1915, pp. 181, 182. Charles III. to Louis XV., 22 December, 1770. This letter while written on 22 December was not despatched until 24 December. Cf. note to p. 181.

²⁵² Thomas Thynne, third Viscount Weymouth, 1734-1796. On Jan. 20, 1768, Weymouth was appointed secretary of state for the northern department, but in October of the same year, on Shelburne's resignation, was transferred to the southern department, where he remained until December 18, 1770. He continued out of office for the next five years. On 10 November, 1775, he again became secretary of state for the southern department. In March, 1779, on the resignation of Suffolk, Weymouth took charge of the northern department in addition to his own seals. In the autumn of the same year, 1779, he resigned both offices. In 1789 he was made first Marquis of Bath. He died in 1796. (Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*.)

²⁵³ *Parliamentary History*, vol. 16, pp. 1371, 1372. Governor Pownall: "On the fifteenth of December, H. M. Secretary of State (Weymouth) did not think

by Lord Rochford, a minister whose experience as ambassador in Spain had left him a convinced believer in the effectiveness of extreme measures in managing disputes with the Spanish court. On the twenty-first of December he despatched the following instructions to Harris. "All negotiations having been for some time at an end between Lord Weymouth or myself and the Spanish ambassador, to whom His Catholic Majesty thought fit to commit his answer to the King's demands, which answer was found totally inadmissible, and it being inconsistent with His Majesty's honour to make any further proposal to the Court of Spain, I am to signify to you the King's pleasure that your longer stay at Madrid appearing entirely unnecessary, you prepare to return home with all convenient speed."²⁵⁴ On the same day in France, Louis XV. decided upon the dismissal of Choiseul. In a council meeting his majesty proposed, really as a test of Choiseul's willingness to carry his wishes into execu-

that he could safely remain in office conducting that negotiation unless it was brought to some point precise and determinate. He therefore on that day made four propositions to the cabinet. These propositions were rejected and on the eighteenth he found it necessary to resign office."

Flammermont (*Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, note, p. 183), offers the following explanation: "Le 18 décembre lord Weymouth avait déclaré dans le conseil des ministres que la dignité de l'Angleterre exigeant qu'on commençât sur-le-champ les hostilités; mais il fut seul de son avis et il donna sa démission." In view of the energetic policy pursued by his successor immediately upon taking office, this explanation seems improbable.

Sir Horace Walpole, *Letters* ed., Peter Cunningham, London, 1857), in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated 18 December, 1770, makes the following observation: "The day before yesterday, Lord Weymouth resigned the seals. If you ask why, so does everybody! and I do not hear that anybody has received an answer." There is here some confusion in date. Pownall, who had made a special investigation into Weymouth's actions and movements spoke in the House of Commons of the resignation as taking place on the eighteenth.

²⁵⁴ S. P. Spain 185. Rochford to Halifax, 21 Dec., 1770. "Convenient speed" in the eighteenth century by no means implied immediate departure. On the contrary, Rochford specifically warned Harris against allowing his preparations to become known until six or seven days after the departure of a messenger bearing tidings of the approaching rupture to the consul at Cadiz whose duty it should be not only to warn the British merchants and masters of ships at Cadiz, but to forward letters to the governor of Gibraltar and the commander-in chief of the British forces in the Mediterranean. Consuls at other ports in Spain were also to be notified without sparing expense.

tion that the minister should draw up a letter to the king of Spain clearly stating that the king of France wished for peace and that no considerations would make him take part in the war if it were declared.²⁵⁵ On Choiseul's remonstrance that he was then awaiting a reply from Spain to a very direct letter of December the nineteenth, and that he had many times given his word that France would never fail to support the stipulations of the Family Compact, Louis XV. took his decision. This, he expressed in an autograph letter to Charles III. which he sent to D'Ossun on December 23,²⁵⁶ with instructions to deliver it secretly into the hands of his Catholic majesty. In his despatch he expressly stated that the domestic conditions of France were such that war would be a terrible evil for him and his people and that if his Catholic majesty could make some sacrifices in order to preserve peace he would render a great service to mankind in general and to the French king in particular. He also significantly assured the Spanish king that no change of ministers would alter the relations between the two courts.²⁵⁷ Before this letter left Paris, Choiseul had his final interview with the king in the course of which, according to a report which reached Sir Horace Walpole, the king made use of the expression, "Monsieur, je vous ai dit que je ne voulais point la guerre". By the evening Choiseul realized that his disgrace had been irrevocably decided

²⁵⁵ M. le Baron de Besenval, *Mémoires*, IV. pp. 20-22. Paris, 1805-7.

²⁵⁶ Dated 21 December, 1770.

²⁵⁷ J. Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, p. 190. Louis XV. to Charles III., 21 Dec., 1770. "Monsieur, mon frère et cousin, Votre Majesté n'ignore pas combien l'esprit d'indépendance et de fanatisme s'est répandu dans mon royaume. La patience et la douceur m'ont conduit jusqu'à présent, mais, poussé à bout et mes parlements s'oubliant jusqu'à vouloir me disputer l'autorité souveraine que je ne tiens que de Dieu, je suis résolu de me faire obéir par toutes les voies possibles, La guerre, dans cet état serait un mal affreux pour moy et pour mes peuples, mais ma tendresse extrême pour Votre Majesté, l'union intime qui règne entre nous, cimentée par notre pacte de famille me fera toujours tout oublier pour elle. Mes ministres ne sont que mes organes; ainsi quand je me crois obligé d'en charger, rien ne peut apporter de changement dans nos affaires, et tant que je vivray, nous serons unis. Si Votre Majesté peut faire quelques sacrifices pour conserver la paix sans blesser son honneur, elle rendra un grand service au genre humaine et à moy en particulier dans les présentes où je me trouve."

upon and on the following morning the blow fell in the form of a peremptory order from the king bidding him relinquish the seals of office.²⁵⁸

The arrival of Louis's letter at Madrid, December 30, caused an entire reversal of Spanish policy.²⁵⁹ Forced to choose between war with England accompanied with an almost complete break with France and surrender to the English demands, Charles chose the latter. Grimaldi sent the new instructions to Masserano on January 2, explaining their character to the ambassador by the words, "Le roi est persuadé particulièrement par les instances du roi son cousin qui lui a demandé quelque sacrifice possible, attendu la situation actuelle de la France".²⁶⁰

The British government was made aware of the arrival of the changed orders on January 18.²⁶¹ As the ministry was only too anxious to ward off a war which threatened their tenor of power with disaster, the Spanish overtures met with no fresh difficulties and on the twenty-second of the month an agreement in the form of a Declaration from Prince Masserano and an acceptance by Lord Rochford was signed. The Declaration stated that his Catholic majesty "Has seen with displeasure

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185. On the 24 December at 10 o'clock in the morning the Duke de la Vrillière bore the following order to the Duke de Choiseul: "J'ordonne à mon cousin, le duc de Choiseul, de remettre en démission de sa charge de secrétaire d'Etat et de surintendant des Portes entre les mains du duc de la Vrillière et de se retirer à Chanteloup jusqu' à nouvelle ordre de ma part."

²⁵⁹ Blart, *Les Rapports de France et de l'Espagne*, p. 193. Cf. also Flammermont, *Le Chancelier Maupeou et les Parlements*, p. 191. D'Ossun au roi de France, 31 Dec., 1770. D'Ossun in handing Louis' letter to Charles informed him of the dismissal of Choiseul. Charles received the news with the exclamation, "Tant pis pour le roi, mon cousin". This was softened by D'Ossun in his report to Louis into "qu'il était fâché pour le bien du service de Votre Majesté, que M. de Choiseul eut mérité cette disgrâce."

²⁶⁰ Blart, *Les Rapports de la France et de l'Espagne*, p. 194. Grimaldi to Masserano, 2 January, 1771. On the same day Charles III. wrote to his nephew, informing him of the decision taken. This letter arrived in Paris on 19 January. Louis' relief was immense and found expression in a letter to the king of Spain, dated 24 January, full of effusive expressions of affection for his relative: "nos liens sont indissolubles et aucun changement dans nos ministères ne peut les faire changer, ainsi que j'en ai déjà assuré Votre Majesté."

²⁶¹ Walpole, *Memoirs of George III.* pub., Sir Denis de Marchant, London, 1845, IV. p. 258.

this expedition . . . disavows the said enterprize . . . and engages to give immediate orders that things shall be restored in the Malouines, at the Port called Egmont, precisely to the state in which they were before the tenth of June, 1770, for which purpose His Catholic Majesty will give orders to one of his officers to deliver up to the officer authorized by His Catholic Majesty the port and fort called Egmont with all the artillery, stores, and effects of His Britannic Majesty and his subjects which were at that place, the day above named; agreeable to the inventory which has been made of them". Two points are of interest—the name of Bucareli was not mentioned and a reservation was included to the effect that the engagement "cannot nor ought anyway to affect the question of the prior right of sovereignty of the Malouine Islands otherwise called Falkland Islands".²⁶²

These points as well as all other conceivable weaknesses which could be urged against the Declaration from an English point of view were brought freely to light in the course of the debates which followed the announcement of the transaction to parliament on January 25. The opposition denounced the whole agreement as an ignominious compromise in which there was no satisfaction and no reparation. The document, they said, was wholly injurious to the British claims of sovereignty to the whole group of Falkland Islands, the restitution being specifically confined to Port Egmont when it was known that Spain had "made her forcible attack on pretence of title to the whole".²⁶³ Prince Masserano's reservation should not have been allowed without at least the inclusion of a counterclaim by Great Britain. They also found fault with the document in that it made no provision for "such censure or punishment of the Governor of Buenos Ayres as might make it manifest that he did not act under any orders general or particular" and lacked "such explanation of his general orders as might sufficiently secure

²⁶² S. P. Foreign Spain, 186. The original document, in French, with seal attached. A copy of "The Acceptance of the Declaration" by Rochford is also present.

²⁶³ *Parliamentary History*, vol. 16, p. 1383. Protest against the Address approving the Spanish Declaration respecting the seizure of the Falkland Islands—House of Lords, article 10.

His Majesty's possessions against the like insult and injury in time to come".²⁶⁴ The government's opponents lamented the want of any provision in the agreement for compensation to Great Britain for the heavy expenditure of funds made necessary by Spain's unwarrantable attack on a British possession left unexplained for more than seven months and finally they strongly suspected that "France had had too much to do in the transaction", that in some fashion that power had been allowed an interference, tending to give a sanction and an efficacy of the most dangerous character to the Family Compact, no other explanation being reasonable to account for the sudden change on the part of the Spanish court.²⁶⁵ Despite these vigorously pressed objections to the terms of settlement an address to the king approving of the Spanish Declaration was finally carried in both houses.²⁶⁶

Meanwhile in Spain diplomatic intercourse between the Spanish government and the British embassy was in suspension. Rochford's letter of December 21 instructing the chargé d'affaires to withdraw from his post with all convenient speed, had reached Madrid on January 4.²⁶⁷ On the twelfth, Harris informed Grimaldi of his instructions and shortly afterwards took leave of the king.²⁶⁸ Preparations for departure, however, filled the

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1360. Mr. Dowdeswell's Resolutions. House of Commons.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1369-1377. Governor Pownall.

²⁶⁶ *Parliamentary History*, vol. 16, p. 1377. Vote in the House of Commons for the Address 271, against 157. *Ibid.*, pp. 1380-1385. Terms of a Protest signed by 18 opponents of the Address in the House of Lords.

²⁶⁷ Grimaldi's instructions to Masserano ordering him to agree to the British terms had been despatched two days before the arrival of this letter at Madrid.

²⁶⁸ S. P. Spain 186. Harris to Rochford, 13 and 17 January, 1771. When informed of Harris' orders to leave Grimaldi "appeared much affected" and "expressed great concern at the disagreeable turn affairs were likely to take". He inquired if there was any time set for the English representative's departure and when told "with all convenient speed" he said that he "was sorry, for his majesty would immediately recall his ambassador". He gave no indication whatever of the changed orders sent ten days previously to Prince Masserano (13 January).

In his despatch of 17 January, Harris reported that his messenger, bearing the important letter with news of the approaching break to the consul at Cadiz had been stopped at Cordova, his letters taken from him and sent to Grimaldi, who returned them, apparently unopened, to Harris who again despatched them to Cadiz.

remainder of the month,²⁶⁹ and Rochford's letter of January 18, ordering immediate resumption of correspondence with the Spanish ministry, found the representative, on February 8, only twenty leagues out of the city. From this place, the small village of Algora, a night's journey carried Harris back to the Spanish capital. To his surprise and embarrassment his official welcome was ungracious in the extreme. In his first interview with Grimaldi, the Spanish minister informed him that he refused to present him to the king or do business with him as British *chargé d'affaires* until he produced credentials. Harris vainly protested that he had acted in that capacity for a year and a half without having any papers, the minister merely replied that he considered himself justified in insisting on the rigid rule of etiquette by the abrupt manner in which England had recalled her representative, and that in the future Spain meant to "measure step for step". He referred disparagingly to the two long periods during which British diplomatic affairs had recently been carried on at Madrid by officials of no higher standing than *chargé d'affaires* and pointed out that when the French ambassador was absent that country appointed a minister plenipotentiary for the interval.²⁷⁰

Through the following month, while awaiting instructions, the English representative remained merely an observer of events. His letters of the period are of considerable interest. The reconciliation, he wrote, gave "the greatest joy to every rank of the people", but he was persuaded that "had this court been seconded by that of Versailles it would never have been brought about and the ministry of His Catholic Majesty subscribed merely not to bring the Family Compact into disgrace which would have been rendering it ridiculous to all Europe had France, as she certainly would, swerved from her engagements the first time she was called upon to fulfil them". The king, he represented, as able to accommodate himself to circumstances and to make it appear that

²⁶⁹ S. P. Spain 186. Monroe (consul general) to Rochford, 25 January, 1771. "Mr. Harris proposes to depart hence within four days."

²⁷⁰ S. P. Spain 186. Harris to Rochford, 9 February, 1771. Mr. De Visme acted as *chargé d'affaires* from the departure of the Earl of Rochford in May, 1766, to the arrival in Spain of Sir James Gray in October, 1767, and Mr. Harris had been in charge of the embassy since Sir James Gray's departure in August, 1769.

he had been genuinely glad of an opportunity to prove his love of peace. He showed pleasure at the news of the warm reception that had been accorded Masserano at the British court after the signing of the Declaration, and at the announcement of a new British ambassador. Grimaldi did not exhibit the same composure and cordiality. He was suffering "from a sense of the loss of personal credit in France" and was "filled with ill humour and peevishness" by the "odious reflections D'Aranda cast upon him for the inconsistent manner in which he had conducted this affair", (e.g., that of the Falkland Islands). He had "lost so much credit with every rank of people" reported Harris, "that nothing but the firm hold he has in the King's good opinion maintains him in his post."²⁷¹ The Declaration itself, Harris wrote, was kept as secret as possible, being only shown to those to whom the government was obliged to allow a view of it, while a report was spread abroad that the English government had given "a verbal assurance to evacuate the Falkland Islands within a space of two months' "²⁷²

²⁷¹ S. P. Spain 186. Harris to Rochford, most private, 14 Feb., 1771. *Ibid.*, 21 and 25 Feb., 1771.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 14 Feb., 1771. The alleged existence of a secret agreement made by Great Britain at the time of the formal restitution of Port Egmont by the Spaniards to withdraw from these islands constituted a part of the argument in which in the nineteenth century, the Argentine Government protested against the reoccupation of these islands by the British. (Cf. Quesada, *Recuerdos de mi vida diplomática*, Buenos Aires, 1904, pp. 210 and 238-243. Vicente E. Quesada to Thomas F. Bayard, 9 Dec., 1885, and 4 May, 1887.) The whole tone of Harris' letter makes it evident that when he wrote the words quoted in the text he did not take the report seriously but considered it to be merely a part of the general attempt of the Spanish government to save its dignity as far as possible in the trying situation in which it found itself. In the correspondence which followed the establishment of British colonial government in the Falklands in 1833, Lord Palmerston absolutely denied that any such agreement as that alleged by the Argentine government had ever existed. (Cf. Quesada, *idem.*, pp. 214-221. Letter from Thomas F. Bayard to Vicente E. Quesada.)

It appears to the present writer that even granting the existence of a promise to withdraw the British settlement from Port Egmont after its formal restitution (and a promise of a more extensive character is not claimed) the British claims to the sovereignty of the islands after 1774 remained the same as before the events of June 1770. The Spanish Declaration of 1771 provided for a return to the state of affairs existing previous to the forced evacuation of Port Egmont by the British on 10 June, 1770. At that time England claimed the Falkland Islands

On March 6, a despatch from Rochford arrived at Madrid which announced the British government's acquiescence in the Spanish demand for credentials and appointed Harris, with warm words of appreciation for the skill with which he had played his part in a difficult matter, as minister plenipotentiary until the arrival of Lord Grantham, the new ambassador. With reference to the Spanish demand the British minister remarked that he thought "Grimaldi's punctilio misplaced at a time of reconciliation".²⁷³ On March 9, Harris was once again presented to his Catholic majesty as the officially recognized British representative.²⁷⁴

The most important matter which fell to his care in the following weeks was the business of securing the acquiescence of the Spanish government in a scheme for a simultaneous reduction of armaments to a peace basis on the part of England, Spain, and France. Rochford had broached the subject to the French and Spanish ambassadors early in March acquainting them of his Britannic majesty's "intentions to make such a reduction of his

group on the basis of the discovery of them by Davis and Hawkins in the sixteenth century; that this claim extended to the East Falkland Island and was not limited merely to the western island is evident from the instructions to McBride (*cf.* pp. 397-401) and his protests in consequence of these instructions directed to Bougainville de Nerville the commanding officer of the French colony of Port Louis on the East Falkland Island. The Spaniards, on the other hand, in 1770, claimed the whole Falkland group on the ground that the French, from whom they derive their claims, had been the first to establish an effective occupation of the islands, maintaining that the mere discovery by the British, unfollowed by occupation, had not been sufficient to establish any claim to the islands.

These opposing claims remained the same after the restoration of the British at Port Egmont as before except that the forced restoration had naturally strengthened the *de facto* position of the British. On the withdrawal of the British force in 1774 the greatest care was taken to leave there the "proper marks or signs of possession of its belonging to the Crown of Great Britain", (*cf.* note 283, p. 446) *e.g.*, a leaden tablet affixed to the door of the blockhouse, the transaction being described by the secretary of state to the British representative in Spain as "a private regulation with regard to our own convenience". In reoccupying the islands in 1833, Great Britain was once again enforcing as in 1771 her view on the sovereignty of the islands.

²⁷³ S. P. Spain 186. Rochford to Harris, 22 Feb., 1771. *Ibid.* Harris to Rochford, most private, 11 March, 1771.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 11 March, 1771. "When I delivered my credentials His Catholic Majesty received them in the most affable manner and after hearing the few words I had to say, replied, 'Je vous ai toujours vu avec plaisir: mais jamais avec tant que dans cette occasion.'"

marine forces as should show his sincere desire for maintaining peace" but pointing out that he naturally expected that their courts would go "at least *pari passu*" with him and be willing to give authentic engagements that they would disarm at the same time. He proposed that the period for disarmament should be that from April the first to the tenth.²⁷⁵ When Harris at the close of March approached Grimaldi on the matter, the latter evinced great discontent at the evidence which he said Great Britain gave of maintaining a considerably augmented peace establishment. He referred especially to the despatch of fleets to the East and West Indies and to the Mediterranean. The British fleet in the latter place, he said, had never been so formidable and looked as if "you meant to control us". "I can assure you," he added, "that if you have so large a fleet, we will have as large a one and if you sail about from place to place, we will also." However, after Grimaldi had seen the king he gave the promise that Spain would follow exactly what England did and would proportion her peace establishment to theirs.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ S. P. Spain 186. Rochford to Harris, 8 March, 1771.

²⁷⁶ The date of disarmament in England and Spain seems not to have been simultaneous in spite of efforts that it should be so.

S. P. Spain, 186. Rochford to Halifax, 23 April, 1771. Rochford wrote that Prince Masserano, having said directions were actually given in Spain for disarmament between the twentieth and the thirtieth and the French ambassador having made the same declarations, "His Majesty has been pleased this day to give orders for the reduction of the navy to the Peace establishment".

S. P. Spain 187. Captain Collins to Lord Sandwich, 24 April, 1771. Collins, however, wrote from the Bay of Cadiz that no orders had been at that time received for disarming the ships of war in the harbor, that everything at Cadiz and the vicinity remained in the same situation as before the convention had been signed.

Ibid. It was not until May 16 that Harris wrote to Rochford, "Grimaldi told me orders had been sent to the several forts for disarming such ships as a probability of rupture had occasioned to be equipped."

Two letters from Charles III. to Louis XV. mark a change in the Spanish king's attitude between March and May on the question of disarmament.

Danvila, *Reinado de Carlos III*, Vol. IV, pp. 152, 154. In a letter of 16 March, 1771, Charles III. drew the attention of the French king to the fleets which England was preparing for the Indies, Jamaica, and the Mediterranean, and urged that it necessitated an equal circumspection on the part of the Bourbon powers. He had decided, he informed the French king, to keep two squadrons armed. On May 27, he wrote to say that he had disarmed but had given such orders that his forces could be rapidly assembled again.

The last of the Falkland Islands affair was the ceremony of the formal restitution of Port Egmont which took place at that port on September 16, 1771. Captain Stott, in command of two sloops and accompanied by a storeship, arrived at the Falklands on the 13th of September and found the Spanish colors flying and troops on shore, and the Spanish commanding officer in possession of such orders that his task was accomplished without difficulty. He described the formalities which took place in a letter to the secretary of the admiralty in the following words. "On Monday the sixteenth of September, I landed followed by a party of marines and was received by the Spanish officer who formally restored me the possession, on which I caused His Majesty's colours to be hoisted and the marines to fire three volleys and the "Juno" five guns and was congratulated as were the officers with me by the Spanish officer with great civility on the occasion. The next day Don Francisco with all the troops and subjects of the King of Spain departed in a schooner which they had with them. I have only to add that this transaction was effected with the greatest appearance of good faith without the least claim or reserve being made by the Spanish officer on behalf of this court."²⁷⁷ At the close of the month, Captain Stott leaving behind him the sloop *Hound* sailed for home. On his arrival, instructions were sent to the British ambassador at Madrid to express to the Spanish minister his majesty's satisfaction at the manner in which the affair had been conducted.²⁷⁸ Grimaldi's remark on receiving an account of the restitution was reported to have been that "that disagreeable business was well over".²⁷⁹

Two and a half years after reestablishing with such pains a garrison upon the Falklands, in April, 1774, the British government withdrew its force leaving only a flag flying and a leaden inscription affixed to the blockhouse to mark for the next half century the British claim to the sovereignty of these south Atlantic islands. From the moment of restitution the admiralty had confessed itself at a loss for a plan by which possession of the

²⁷⁷ S. P. Spain 188. Captain Stott to Mr. Stephens, 9 Dec., 1771. (Enclosed in Admiralty to Rochford, 11 Dec., 1771.)

²⁷⁸ Add. MSS. 24 157. Rochford to Grantham, 13 Dec., 1771.

²⁷⁹ S. P. Spain 189. Grantham to Rochford, 9 Jan., 1772.

islands could be "constantly and effectively kept up".²⁸⁰ For the moment it had been decided to maintain twenty-five marines, fifty men, and a small vessel there,²⁸¹ although it was recognized that this garrison, which it was estimated would cost the State £ 3,552 annually to maintain, would be unable to protect the Islands in case of a rupture.²⁸² By 1774, when it was no longer a question of showing the world that "nothing can deter Great Britain from asserting her rights", when popular excitement had subsided and the miserable experience of the English garrison had conclusively proved that the reported fertility of the islands had been much overstated, the government felt able to withdraw the seamen and marines on the ground that the advantages of keeping a garrison there were not worth the expense.²⁸³ In send-

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.* Lord Sandwich to Rochford, 26 Feb., 1772.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.* Rochford to Grantham, 6 March, 1772. The last body of men sent to the Falkland Islands previous to the withdrawal in 1774 consisted of 6 officers, 18 seamen, and 23 marines, who had with them an armed shallop. They arrived at Egmont on 28 Feb., 1773, and left 20 May, 1774. Cf. Penrose, B. *Last Expedition to Port Egmont in the Falklands in the year 1772*, London, 1775, pp. 5 and 6.

²⁸² S. P. Spain 189. Admiralty to Rochford, 26 Feb., 1772. "We are at a loss to suggest any plan by which the possession of the port and fort of Port Egmont and the islands of Falkland may be constantly and effectually kept up even at any expense; but we are of opinion that a smaller number of men than those now employed will equally maintain a mark of possession and that the present number would be no security to the place in case of a rupture with a foreign power." An estimate is enclosed of the charge of maintaining 50 men at Falkland Islands with a small vessel to attend them—3,552 pounds.

Ibid. Rochford to Lord Sandwich, 29 Feb., 1772. The letter expresses approval of the plan suggested in the letter from the admiralty and gives orders for it to be carried into execution.

²⁸³ B. Penrose, *An Account of the Last Expedition to Port Egmont in the Falklands in the year 1772*, London, 1775, pp. 76, 77. "May twentieth everything being ready for our departure we took a formal leave of the islands the seamen being ranged in order, and the marines drawn up under arms, while the following inscription, engraved on a piece of lead, was affixed to the door of the blockhouse: 'Be it known to all nations that the Falkland Islands, with this fort, the store-houses, wharfs, harbors, bays and creeks thereunto belonging are the sole right and property of His Most Sacred Majesty George the Third, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc. In witness thereof this plate is set up, and His Britannic Majesty's colors left flying as a mark of possession by S. W. Clayton, commanding officer at Falkland Islands, A. D. 1774.'

"The Union Jack being then hoisted, the people gave three cheers, and we immediately embarked with the utmost order and satisfaction, waiting only for a fair wind to proceed on our voyage. We took our departure without the least regret."

ing information of this step to Grantham Rochford remarked that there was no necessity of officially communicating it to the Spanish ministers "since it is only a private regulation with regard to our own convenience", but as he was inclined to think from what passed formerly on this subject, "that they would be rather pleased by this event", if they mentioned it, Grantham might "freely avow it without entering into any reasoning".²⁸⁴ With this communication the Falkland Islands passed out of the diplomatic correspondence of the two courts in the period covered by this monograph.

²⁸⁴ Add. MSS 24160. Rochford to Grantham, 11 Feb., 1774.

"Lord North in a speech some days ago in the House of Commons, on the subject of the naval establishment this year, mentioned the intention of reducing our sea forces in the East Indies . . . and at the same time hinted, as a matter of small consequences, that in order to avoid the expense of keeping seamen or marines at Falkland's Islands, they would be brought away afterwards, leaving there the proper marks or signs of possession and of its belonging to the Crown of Great Britain."